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JOHN GALSWORTHY.

John Galsworthy

JOHN GALSWORTHY was more than an English novelist. In Continental Europe, and among the German-speaking countries particularly, he was not only the best known English novelist of his generation, he was also a world writer whom they took to their hearts. When he went to Vienna in 1929 the foremost Viennese actor delivered a eulogy, and a thousand men and women listened in rapt attention while he read in English from his works. The recent award of the Nobel prize was an inevitable crowning of a European reputation.

It is said that his popularity and prestige were greater abroad than at home. It is said that the English speak of him as English Henry spoke of Percy of Northumberland, dead on Chevy Chase—

"Now God be with him," said our King,
"Since 'twill no better be;
I trust I have within my realm,
Five hundred as good as he."

If there is a certain insularity in such an attitude (supposing that it actually exists) an American can only remind his British contemporaries that Whitman had his earliest praisers abroad, and endeavor to account for the deep interest and real affection which the works of John Galsworthy have always aroused in the United States.

It was assuredly not his American characters that won us. They are neither numerous nor particularly successful, and indeed if they had been as distinguished as the English Forsytes, we should have been put off by the strange jargon they spoke, a muddle of American dialects which not even *Punch* has ever equalled. But this is unimportant, for they were unimportant in his scheme.

What won us first in those now almost forgotten years of the 'sixs, the 'sevens, and the 'nines, was that strange and thrilling social conscience, which was more articulate and more persuasive in his novels than in the raucous shoutings of our own muckrakers, or the ironical disintegrations of Bernard Shaw. "The Island Pharisees," "The Man of Property," most of all "Fraternity," where each character had his shadow in the slums, were disturbing and inspiring because they were so fair-minded and so kind. To an American society that had just ranged itself, they spoke of the responsibilities that come with culture achieved, they carried a warning from a stable society to one just stabilizing. All this is far away and long ago, and now we talk more of revolution than of responsibility, yet the influence of that aristocratic liberalism which in this country certainly was often born of a reading of Galsworthy is still potent, if no longer regarded as the answer to our problems. It was a first stage in the transition from the arrogant confidence of the nineteenth century to the radical reconstructions of society under way in the twentieth. Those whose imaginations were first touched by the early novels of Galsworthy were fortunate, for ideas of change came to them in the guise of an inspiring duty, and not as stark necessities driven upon them by war and economic chaos.

These early enthusiasms were momentary, and one doubts whether "Fraternity" could stir us now except by its virtues—not transcendent— as sheer story. But there is another and subtler and more lasting debt which American readers owe to Galsworthy. The monumental work by which Galsworthy will unquestionably be best remembered is "The Forsyte Saga," of which the first volume remains the most impressive. Its admirers claim, and rightly, that as a pageant of capitalistic England in the Victorian age, it is worthy of comparison with Thackeray, and comparable in sincerity and scope, if not in variety, with Balzac. Yet for Americans it has a closer claim upon attention. Our abundant British inheritances of blood and culture have always aroused our interest to the point of fascination in any strong study of racial character and personality among the English. And especially is this true when the English author depicts with power the slow moulding, into distinctive and intensely individual traits, of those qualities, those instincts, those tendencies from which, under different skies and different circumstances, our own characteristic mental behavior has been made. To the American well read in his own literature and history, English types, when felt as such and projected with the realizing imagination of genius, have the fascination of might-have-been, either for better or for worse. When English fiction is written with a sense of racial history, we read in it of a life that is paral-

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Saintsbury, the Connoisseur

By BEN RAY REDMAN

I KNEW, of course, that is was bound to happen sooner or later, and the probabilities were that I would live to see and lament the day. For a good many years now, at least several more than a decade, I have been looking at a certain fairly long shelf in my library, wondering just when the inevitable event would be announced. The author of the many books on that shelf had left the Biblical span well behind him — he was never one for minimum allowances for anything, and the final reckoning could not long be postponed. But postponed it was with singular fortitude and persistence, year after year, until one was nearly persuaded that it would never come at all. So it was with a shock, almost of the completely unexpected, that I read on the morning of Sunday, January 29th, that on the previous day, at his home in Bath, England, George Edward Bateman Saintsbury, "literary critic and connoisseur of wines," had died at the age of eighty-seven.

Born at Southampton, on October 23rd, 1845—died at Bath, on January 28th, 1933. That in itself is a far from usual record. But Seneca, among others, has pointed out that years provide no fit measurement for the life of man. *Longa est vita, si plena est.* And the life of George Saintsbury was not merely long, but long in the sense that it was full. Those thirty-odd volumes on the previously mentioned shelf are standing proof of the fulness. A "History of Criticism," in three stout volumes; "a "History of English Prosody," in three volumes almost equally stout; a "History of English Prose Rhythm"; a "History of the French Novel," in two volumes; a "Short History of English Literature" (*short* meaning some eight hundred pages); four volumes of "Collected Essays and Papers"; one volume on the English novel, another on Elizabethan literature, another on nineteenth century literature, another entitled "The Earlier Renaissance," and still another called "The Flourishing of Romance"—these are some of the thirty-odd, and *they* (the thirty and more) represent only a fraction, perhaps a third, perhaps less, of their author's almost sixty years of writing life.

What he attempted, what he did, was prodigious. There are dry and dusty pedants, breathing the stuffy air of the infinitesimal cubby-holes of specialization, who will tell you that he attempted too much. Some of my most unpleasant minutes have been spent in argument with mole-scholars of that sort. But he did not attempt too much, because his attempt and his accomplishment were identical; and he has himself described the pedants who condemn him. Here we have them, pinned on a small cork as they deserve: "the acrid pedant who will allow no one whom he dislikes to write well, and no one at all to write on any subject that he himself has written on, or would like to write on, who dwells on dates and commas, who garbles out and foists in, whose learning may be easily exaggerated but whose taste and judgment cannot be, because they do not exist. . . ." We meet the same pedant, or the plural of the kind, in a letter that the late Walter Raleigh (not then Sir) wrote to D. Nichol Smith almost thirty years ago. Raleigh, taking up his professorship at Oxford, was a little worried by the secretive and defensive attitude of his learned colleagues; but his friend Firth reassured him.

> Firth talked to me like a godmother; and said that I mustn't be frightened of them, as most newcomers are. He's quite right—they frighten each other to death, and any moderately impudent man can dupe them all. They regard knowledge as a kind of capital—not revenue. They sit on the bag. It's the credit of knowing they care for, and the discredit of not knowing, they fear.

These people, according to their lights, had a legitimate complaint against Saintsbury (as they had against Gosse, who attempted less), but their lights were not his. He *did* make mistakes in dates; he *did* err in quotation, when he was separated from books that he knew much better than the gentlemen who had to have the same books at their elbow in order to prove any knowledge of them; but I refuse to believe that he ever "faked" as his accusers say. I remember the moment of potential disillusionment through which I passed, years ago, when a certain allusion to Fronto, in a footnote of Saintsbury's "History of Criticism," convinced me that Saintsbury had never read Fronto. But a little reflection led me to the conclusion that undoubtedly he had read the most excellent dicta of Marcus Aurelius's tutor, that he had made an abstract of Fronto's writings, and (again separated from the original) had misinterpreted his notes. Such accidents happen, and they are seldom important. Certainly they were not important in the case of a man who took all literature as his province, and made that province his own by right of indisputable conquest.

There is overwhelming evidence to prove that Saintsbury exaggerated not at all, or

This Week

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Next Week, or Later

NOEL COWARD.
By JOHN CORBIN.

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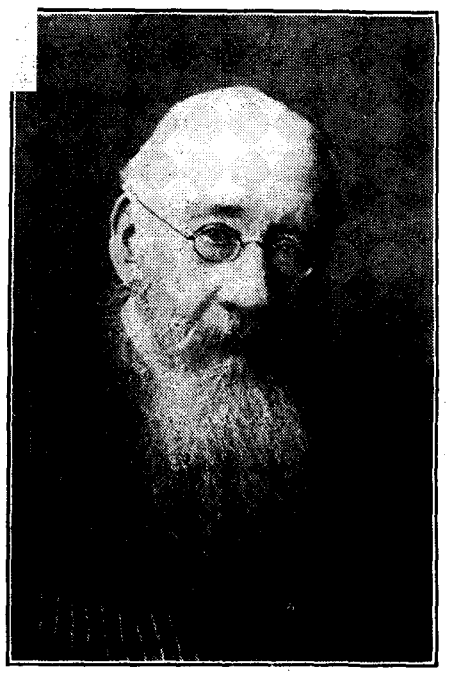
very slightly, when, in his preface to "Notes on A Cellar-Book," he declared: "I have never yet given a second-hand opinion on any thing, or any book, or person." His ideal critic was one who had, to begin with, read everything, and, if possible, forgotten nothing for purposes of comparison. The first condition, so far as printed records show, he fulfilled as nearly as has anyone who has lived since the multiplication of books became an unbearable white man's burden; and the second condition he fulfilled within the limits which divinity has imposed upon humanity. Seldom did he ever have to say, as he once said regarding the origin of the word Communism, "I suppose I once knew; but I have forgotten." It may be stated quite simply and without exaggeration, I believe, that Saintsbury experienced a vaster body of literature, with full appreciation, and knew more about more literature, than any other Englishman who has yet lived. (The national limitation obviates a certain amount of the argument which in any case is inevitable.) Other scholars have carried flashlights into holes and corners of literature where they have studied objects, in full light and at leisure, which Saintsbury may have glimpsed briefly and in shadow; but their work has been on the minute scale, while his has been on the grand. He did not belong to the small, closed world of the academicians, but to what he would call "the general congregation of decently educated and intelligent people." And he would certainly prefer their everlasting gratitude, which he boundlessly deserves, to the somewhat prickly wreath which sits uneasily upon the pedant's brow only so long as another pedant (for lack of accumulated minutiæ) is incapable of knocking it off.

Few lives of so long duration have been consistently and amorously devoted to the cause of literature. When I reviewed "The Collected Essays and Papers" of George Saintsbury, in the year of his eightieth birthday, I quoted a passage



GEORGE SAINTSBURY.

from his preface to his first "Scrap Book," published in 1922; and I shall quote it again for the benefit of those who know little or nothing of his career. Then he described that career as follows:

> Twenty years of passive education and eight of active schoolmastering . . . twenty more of London journalism of a rather varied type; twenty more yet of that professorial life in a Scotch university, which, especially for persons not to the country born, gave an almost ideal combination of vocational employment, with varied residence and opportunities for avocational work and play; yet another seven of "shelf," with the opportunities that shelf gives of looking without falling "down and out," and certain circumstances not favorable to mere going to sleep on it. . . .

That was the record up to 1922. And ten more years of "shelf," during which the confirmed man of letters persisted in being the man of letters, never slipping below his established level of excellence, and you have the record complete up to his final day in the first month of 1933.

It was a life devoted to letters, but it was a career in which the fullest possible appreciation of literature was made possible by a full and sensuous appreciation of life. Those of us who did not know the man can arrive at a certain intimacy with him through his "Scrap Books" and his "Cellar-Book," and between, or in, the lines of everything he ever wrote there is further knowledge to be gained. He was a great walker and a shrewd whist player; he liked dancing, in his younger years, and pretty girls (the wife whom he married in 1869 died in 1924); he couldn't get very far at cricket because of near-sightedness and a native clumsiness, but he liked and played billiards as well his eyesight would permit. Tea, with milk, *not cream*, was his preferred drink at breakfast; of a certain amount of strong beer, immediately *after*, he approved; a bottle of wine at dinner, and a bottle afterward, he thought a decent allowance for an Englishman in good health, but there is no space here to deal with, or recapitulate, his observations on the art of drinking; they are numerous, and all set down in their proper places where they should be read. (But, let it be added for the benefit of an unregenerate nation, he detested, abominated, and "in the extremest Rabelaisian variety and floridity" condemned the cocktail habit.)

But now, for the sake of those who are still unacquainted with Saintsbury, and for his own sake, it is probably time—in the course of this rambling and affectionate article—to come to grips with his critical credo, and to state in plain English the method of his critical practice. His method was so simple, his practice was so consistent, that one hesitates to set them forth in the presence of our younger, and semi-articulate, estheticians. He was never mystical, metaphysical, or pseudo-scientific; the isolated esthetic emotions of a T. S. Eliot and the psychological reactions of an I. A. Richards were so much jargon to him. He actually and confidently relied upon his own taste and judgment, which had been conditioned by long contact with what, according to general agreement, is the best literature mankind has produced. He was supremely sure of himself (and he had reason), and he was utterly blunt. What, he asked, had an author attempted? How far had he succeeded? Where did it fit in with his (Saintsbury's) literary scheme of things? The last question might seem limiting and fatal to one who is aware of the limitations of even Aristotle (limitations discovered, let it be said, after many centuries), but no one need worry, immediately, about Saintsbury's limitations, when one remembers his greeting of Norman Douglas's "South Wind." There, if you like, was a book new enough and strange enough to puzzle the critic of twenty; but the critic of almost eighty knew exactly where it belonged.

His style, of course, has bothered a good many respectable people. He liked odd words, but only when the odd word happened to be precise. As he explained in a footnote which put Hallam in his place: "A sovereign of just weight, fineness, and stamp is none the worse for having been little circulated; nor is a word." When the precise word was not available, he minted it himself from the Greek or Latin, and this was annoying until readers got used to it. And then, of course, there were his clauses within clauses, and his italics. These, too, were troublesome until readers discovered they were doing their job, and doing it perfectly. After which experienced readers could confidently state of Saintsbury's style, as he said of Sainte-Beuve's: "It can say anything that the author wishes to say, and does not try to say what he cannot."

What he tried to say and did say throughout sixty years is that literature is one of life's greatest blessings, that it offers ecstasy, rest, refreshment, and amusement without end; and it was his constant care to share with others his knowledge of where the blessing might be found concentrated and in abundance. He was singularly stout-minded, never admitting that a person or author (excepting Carlyle, with whom he often disagreed) had influenced his opinions in the slightest degree; and his criticism was of the most practical variety. He could discuss the theory of equitation with the best of the experts, but he preferred to go into the ring and judge actual horses. Full of prejudices in his private life, he was amazingly unprejudiced when he sat down to judge a book. He was the staunchest of Tories, but a non-Tory author—as author—was safe in his hands. He did not relish a certain kind of Gallic dirt, but as an editor of the Caroline poets he did not balk at the freedom of "Leoline and Sydanis." Not only could he recognize, appreciate, and do just honor to the "earth-born fire" of literature at its greatest, but he had a shrewd eye for the gradations of second, third, and even fifth-rate talent; an eye that was continuously useful to the historian of literature. And he wore astonishingly well. It is too easy for a man to make up his mind, as did Jeffrey—with genius blossoming all around him—that "the age of original genius is over." This Saintsbury never did. The "comprehensive and catholic possession of literature—all literature and all that is good in all" was what he believed the ideal criticism should make possible. Never was an ideal better served or followed. Covering many centuries and several languages, he demonstrated again and again that the supreme function of literary criticism, whether it be art or history, is to "help the ear to listen when the horns of Elfland blow." The ears he helped are numberless, and the gratitude of their possessors is beyond measurement.

It is reported from London that the autograph manuscript of Mozart's "Coronation Concert" has been sold in Berlin for £1,560.

Religio Poetae

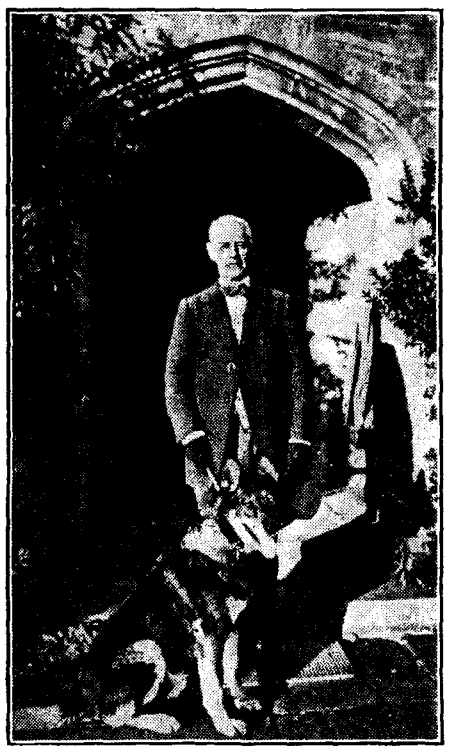
By ALASTAIR W. R. MILLER

FACT killed Beauty.
(Mourn ai ai, O mourn.)
Fact took an arrow
With hand unhesitating,
Correctly and precisely
She put it to the bowstring,
Lifted it self-assuredly
To the glance of her eye
And let it fly
Neither low nor high
But straight straight and unswerving
To the heart of Beauty.
(Wherefore mourn ai ai.)
But also rejoice loud loud and loud
And also rejoice
With heart and soul and voice
And the gladsome noise
Of girls and boys
Loving on the fields
And knowledgeable of happiness.
For Truth will come
By divers unnecessary wandering
Through nowhere-leading glades
That lead from nowhere,
And she will stop to comb out
The symmetry from her hair,
And will have to run home
To fetch her comb,
And, forgetting for what she went back,
Will come again
Plying in most admired disorder her direction,
For Truth knows little of such things
But Truth will come
By divers unnecessary wanderings
And she will breathe on Beauty lying dead
(Mourn ai ai, O mourn.)
And Beauty will lift up her head
(Wherefore mourn ai ai no longer.)
And hand in hand with Truth
New-breathing Beauty will go,
And that is all ye need to know.

Galsworthy the Man

By J. W. CUNLIFFE.

WHEN I was in England as Director of the London Branch of the American University Union in 1918-19, I came frequently into contact with Galsworthy, as we were both serving on an international committee for the rehabilitation of the wounded and mutilated of the Great War. One could not help but be struck by



GALSWORTHY, THE COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.

the combined considerateness and reserve, the quietness and dignity of manner, which made him an ideal type of English gentleman. It was characteristic of him that while H. G. Wells was arguing energetically for the League of Nations and Arnold Bennett was no less busily engaged in the National Publicity Office under Lord Northcliffe, Galsworthy had been working qui
in a French milit
seur. So, at any r
nobody ever heard Galsworthy himself make the slightest reference to his war services.

It was my privilege to submit to him on behalf of President Butler the invitation to deliver the address at the celebration to be given in New York in honor of James Russell Lowell in 1919 by the American Academy of Arts and Letters. I had some difficulty in persuading him on account of his diffidence and dislike of appearing in public, and only the argument that he could help to cement the bonds between the United States and Great Britain ultimately induced him to accept. I had returned to New York by the time the celebration took place, and was listening with pleasure to his beautifully phrased and sympathetic address (evidently recited from memory) when to the consternation of his distinguished audience the orator's voice faltered and ceased. "I am very sorry," he said, "but I have lost the thread. I must look at my manuscript." He produced a typewritten sheaf from his pocket, and for a few painful minutes sought the place at which his memory had failed him. Then he resumed the address, which was a finished literary production entirely worthy of the occasion. In the tumult of applause that followed one felt a note of personal affection and sympathy for the speaker as well as of admiration for a magnificent effort.

Galsworthy's visits to this country were frequent and prolonged after the welcome he received from the American public at that time, and he became more habituated to the popular platform; but he retained something of the modest charm, the gentle, appealing, and yet dignified, shyness that made that New York speech memorable. I remember an address on "The Herd Spirit" spoken from the chancel steps of the Columbia University Chapel with an obvious hesitancy and embarrassment caused by the unfamiliar ecclesiastical surroundings. Yet there was always something very endearing about Galsworthy's timidity, for such modesty is a rare phenomenon on the platform.

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On more than one occasion he made long stays in the United States and settled down to regular work. He found material for his novels, and picked up during one visit the title of one of his plays, "The Skin Game." The small son of one of his Southern hosts, having the privilege of collecting in his money box all the coppers that came into the house, exchanged a hundred of them for a paper dollar given him by his father. Next day the father still had the coppers and the small boy claimed them as his due under the contract. "Why," said the father, "this is a skin game." Galsworthy was amused by the incident and interested in the expression, asked what it meant, and adopted it as the title of one of his best plays.

By thousands of Americans Galsworthy will be remembered not merely for his literary gifts but for the charm of his personality. There will be countless people on both sides of the Atlantic who will feel that without him the world is a poorer place to live in. So far, John Galsworthy's literary reputation has stood the test of time better than that of either of the other two great Edwardians, his contemporaries, Arnold Bennett and H. G. Wells. His work has, more than theirs, the charm of a personal style which is perhaps the surest preservative of a work of literature after its immediate contemporary interest has gone by. In his own field—the social history of the English upper middle class during the last half century—Galsworthy cannot be surpassed. The son of a London lawyer, educated at Harrow and Oxford, he knew this class thoroughly and yet was able to regard it with a detachment which was for the most part artistically perfect.

As a dramatist Galsworthy showed the same artistry, the same sense of style and form, and the same sympathy verging sometimes on sentimentality that he had shown in his novels. I remember that when his first play "The Silver Box" was on the English stage, I discussed with the present Lord Hewart, now Lord Chief Justice, and another distinguished English barrister, the court scene at the end of the play, and they both agreed that far from being typical or representative it was wholly impossible. I was not entirely convinced, but I think one must admit that Galsworthy's intense sympathy for the underdog sometimes inclined him to sentimental exaggeration in their defense. One sees it not only in "The Silver Box" but in "Strife," "Justice," "The Pigeon," and "Escape." In "The Skin Game" and "Loyalties" however, he handled these difficult questions of class antagonism with great delicacy and discretion, holding the balance firm and true between the contending interests. He liked his dramas to have "a spire of meaning," and this was no doubt the ground of Max Beerbohm's quip that Galsworthy had "sold his birthright for a pot of message." But he never sacrificed his artistic sincerity or deviated by a hair's breadth from what he believed to be true for the sake of literary success or popular applause.

John Galsworthy

(Continued from first page)

lel with, and contrasting to our own, in a degree seldom found or felt in the literature of the Continent. Hence the Jolyons, the Rawdons, the Tom Joneses, the Mrs. Proudies, and the Pickwicks of English fiction mean more to the American reader, grip his interest with a deeper sense of significant reality, are more familiar, even when most insularly English, than the great types of French, German, Russian, or Scandinavian fiction.

And surely no one in our day has made greater contributions to the racial history of English personality than John Galsworthy. No single racial type and personality in contemporary English fiction is worthy to be advanced beyond Soames Forsyte. He is propertied England incarnate, a symbol of the later nineteenth century in its most English moment, an island philistine, superb in his eccentric but completed evolution from the so-called Anglo-Saxon stock.

Southern Progressivism

LIBERALISM IN THE SOUTH. By VIRGINIUS DABNEY. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1932. $3.50.

Reviewed by DONALD DAVIDSON

MR. DABNEY'S book is a timely and engaging historical account, running from Revolutionary beginnings to our own day; it is not a speculation or an argument. Nevertheless, so much enthusiastic research into the past by a Southern liberal of the younger group, himself a Virginian and a brilliant journalist, suggests a decided change of attitude among the vigorous spirits who have been crusading for liberalism in the Southern states. In former years, the rising liberals of the Grady-Page-Aycock school turned their faces irrevocably from a past which seemed to them too painful or too mistaken to recall. Mr. Dabney instead seeks precedent and sanction in the Southern past for the modern liberalism which he upholds. The main stream of Southern thought, he argues, has been more liberal than otherwise; and the commonly deplored phenomena of "backwardness" are sins against the Southern tradition rather than expression of the faith of the fathers.

Possibly Mr. Dabney, like some others, has felt the need to rationalize new gospels by appealing to old prophets. Broadus Mitchell, George Fort Milton, and Judge Robert Winston are but a few of those Southerners who have lately fortified their dissent from Southern conservatism by writing biographies of men who themselves were dissenters. Gerald Johnson, that most fiery of Southern reformers, speaking at the dedication in Charleston of a monument to the Confederate defenders of Fort Sumter, only lately apostrophized their spirit in an appeal for a renewed defense of liberty against the encroaching extremes of Fascism and Communism. "If it (the creed of Fascism or Communism) is the creed of the new South," he said, "then that new South is no true son of the old, but a bastard unworthy to bear out a great name."

This change of heart among liberals is a change for the better. They may now meet the charge, which has not been without point, that they are reckless uprooters of tradition, preferring any foreign idea, and particularly a Northern idea, to a native Southern one. Furthermore, the new attitude brings them into a ground where serious discussion may replace the old promises of educational or industrial utopias, or the mere wild flinging of epithets like "renegade" and "yokel" in which both the liberals and their various opponents have indulged.

To such level-headed consideration Mr. Dabney's study opens the way most invitingly. It is written in good temper, with fewer lapses into violent Menckenese than is the custom among liberals. Its facts are presented in rich circumstantiality and are so ordered as to emphasize somewhat the theory of the continuity of Southern liberalism. One must wholly admire Mr. Dabney's energy and devotion. The only debate can be with his interpretation of facts and with the confusions that result from looking at Southern history through liberal spectacles.

In "The Era of Jefferson," to which Mr. Dabney devotes several chapters, he is on firm ground. He retells, convincingly enough, the familiar story of the democratic achievements that proceeded from the Virginia school of liberals of whom Jefferson was the centre: the fight for political independence and for separation of church and state; the early but thwarted Southern attempts toward abolition of slavery; the literary tendencies and educational schemes which resulted in the very early founding of universities in Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia, and the good order of private education that went with them. At times Mr. Dabney draws parallels between the South and New England. The South, for example, led the way in disestablishing state churches; Massachusetts, in 1833, was the last of the thirteen original states to cease levying taxes for the support of a single denomination. In 1840—indeed, even in 1860—there were, in proportion to population, more students in Southern colleges than in Northern ones. He discusses the achievements of such neglected libertarians as Willie Jones, Nathaniel Macon, Christopher Gadsden, but, like a good Virginian, fails somehow to do justice to Andrew Jackson and the libertarians of the frontier.

But Mr. Dabney rather skimps his task of probing eighteenth century liberalism to its philosophic and economic foundation, and in general commits himself to a loose and shifting definition of the term liberal. The strong words in his vocabulary are always "freedom," "tolerance," "social awareness," but he uses them without much question as to how differently the successive generations have interpreted them or valued them. He does not care whether his liberal heroes attach to the "least government" school of Jefferson or the "much government" school of today. The result is a good deal of turning and twisting to keep liberalism always on the side of virtue.

In the matter of slavery, war, and reconstruction, Mr. Dabney's loyalties are divided between his principles, which give him a distaste for slavery, and his rather weekly rationalized fidelity to the South. By a little more reflection he might have discovered that the North stood for one kind of liberalism and the South for another. Instead, he summarily puts the blame on "hotheaded" South Carolina and refuses fair consideration to Calhoun's revised version of the Jeffersonian philosophy.

So too in the aftermath of war and in the mixed currents of our own time. There are many liberal heroes to praise, from Lamar, who eulogized Sumner, and Alderman, Curry, Aycock, and Page, who agitated for progressive education, up to Mr. Dabney's own contemporaries in literature and journalism who have introduced the spirit of realism or criticism or rebelliousness that he sees fit to call liberal. He records at impressive length the educational changes which have given the South its public school system and its flourishing universities. He finds a great stir of liberal activity to report in the way of crusading newspapers, conciliatory inter-racial committees—even a little in politics. But there are many villains, too, apparently not liberal, and a singularly immovable body of Southerners who have no horror of the Ku Klux Klan or the old-fashioned church. The common man has risen to power; that, it seems, counts as a liberal gain. But Pitchfork Ben Tillman and Huey Long are somehow not a gain. Southern industry thrives, but Gastonia and Harlan disturb the scene. The universities are a new power in the land; but Bishop Cannon and the Fundamentalists are a power, too. In the end, though Mr. Dabney feels that liberalism has flourished despite handicaps and that "in the Southern hagiology the liberals are entitled to the most commanding place," he seems none too sure of comfort.

Possibly Mr. Dabney ought to have considered how easily liberalism stretches. There is something oddly elastic about a notion that will make John Brown of Ossawattomie and General Robert E. Lee brothers in liberalism. Stretch it only a little, and the South is revealed as a living museum of all the forms of liberalism that ever existed. Protestantism in general and Bishop Cannon's anti-Catholicism in particular were historic liberal features. Huey Long is a liberal, too—a Jacksonian Democrat, new style. The Confederates were good state rights men fighting, as Parrington says of Calhoun, "against a universal cash-register evaluation of life" and the tyranny of majorities. Liberalism is not, after all, the basic social philosophy that Mr. Dabney claims it to be—not until it attaches itself to other foundations than merely a passionate quest for freedom, as it did attach itself in the days of Jefferson.

Really, Mr. Dabney seems more like a progressive than a liberal. He is so anxious to produce a "civilized" South that one suspects him of being capable of sacrificing a good deal of freedom if he could be sure of serving progress. Progressivism, rather than liberalism, might indeed have been the theme of his book, at least of the latter half, as it was of Edwin Mims's "The Advancing South," which covered through selected instances much of the modern ground of Mr. Dabney's survey. But no matter what the name, Mr. Dabney's appeal to the Southern tradition makes it clear that the Southern liberals need some of Jefferson's hard practicality to mix with their idealism. They must exhibit an ethics and an economics to go with their love of freedom, for only by such a means can they avoid having their own weapons of liberalism turned upon them. If they will not do this—if they insist on their old strategy of running benevolently from point to point, in order to free whoever happens at the moment to be in chains, then they are likely to have to put up for some time to come with the "rabble rousers" and "bucolic denizens of the hinterlands" who stir Mr. Dabney's wrath. They should, in fact, thank the Lord that they have, under democracy, no worse comrades.

NORTH CAROLINA SCENE, BY HARRISON CADY.
From "Fine Prints of the Year 1932" (Minton, Balch).

To honor the memory of Lafcadio Hearn, it is intended to erect a Hearn Memorial Museum at Matsue, where Hearn first taught in a Japanese school.

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Republican Germany

GERMANY PUTS THE CLOCK BACK. By EDGAR ANSEL MOWRER. New York: William Morrow & Company. 1933. $2.50.

Reviewed by OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

MR. MOWRER has been for ten years one of the very best of the American correspondents in Berlin. His fitness to discuss the new Germany is therefore not to be questioned. In this volume, he has given us a careful survey of the infant German Republic from its foundation until the end of last year. It was, of course, not possible for him to foresee the elevation of Hitler to the Chancellorship, but that fact renders the book all the more timely, especially as he has devoted a number of chapters to the amazingly cheap and brainless, yet extremely dangerous, demagogue who at this writing has reached the headship of the great German state.

Mr. Mowrer is exceedingly critical of the Germans. With every evidence of his desire to be just he has none the less leaned to those who feel that Germany has pursued ever since the treaty of Versailles an underhand course for the purpose of nullifying the results of the war. If he does not go as far as some of the critics who declare that Germany has been the most colossal swindler in the history of nations, he still believes that it has been, to say the least, highly insincere. He is thoroughly warranted in his castigation of the Social-Democratic leadership of the Republic, for it is to the weakness of that leadership that the present horribly discouraging situation is due. It is true that the leaders had an extraordinarily difficult situation to handle when the monarchy collapsed and the enemy was at the door, but they erred incredibly in not taking hold with a firm hand and resolutely warring upon those elements in the community whose domination of the industrial, banking, and agricultural life of Germany could not but constitute a menace to the Republic. Nothing could illustrate this weakness more clearly than the Government's toleration of private armies, such as Hitler's forces, the Stahlhelm, and the Reichswehr. Above all, the treatment of Hitler himself betrayed incredible weakness.

In 1923, Hitler was captured in the abortive revolt which he started in Munich with General Ludendorff. He was sentenced to five years in prison and then released after he had served about a year. Any other government would have taken this man, who was not even a citizen of Germany, and put him over the frontier with orders never to return, instead of which the Government allowed him to continue his propaganda until he suddenly appeared after the election of 1930 as the dominator of more than one hundred members of the Reichstag. If it is explained that the German Government did not realize that the man had within him the power that he is now displaying, the answer is that during all the time he was building up the Nationalist-Socialist party he was preaching hatred, a literally obscene race prejudice, and death and destruction, not only to the Jews, but to all the Marxians in Germany. No one could have embarked upon a course more likely to endanger the public order and to inflame the passions of the multitude. Not only did the German Government tolerate this, but it was actually encouraged by many judges, military men, and officials of all sorts and kinds left over from the old régime. Mr. Mowrer puts it well:

> Imagine a virgin republic that appeals to old-time monarchists and generals to defend it against a naughty Communist! Inevitably it falls into the enemy's hands. . . . Imagine a republic that allows its laws to be interpreted by monarchist judges, its government to be administered by old-time functionaries brought up in fidelity to the old régime; that watches passively while reactionary school teachers and professors teach its children to despise the present freedom in favor of a glorified feudal past; that permits and encourages the revival of the militarism that is chiefly responsible for the country's previous humiliation.

Back of all this lies the curious baffling, almost ununderstandable, psychology of the German people themselves. Why is it that the best educated and in many ways the most intelligent people on earth have made such a mess of their first effort at democratic self-government and have fallen for the wiles of so low a demagogue? To this question, Mr. Mowrer gives a great deal of attention, and his findings are of great value. The Germans, he says, are fundamentally "low or middle class." They are "born Babbitts." More than that, says Mr. Mowrer,

> To the outside world Germany seems the country of organized science. But equally it is the country of rampant superstition. This people is rich in intellect, poor in common sense. It radiates intelligence, yet its several minds are open to the cosmic night. Through the openings drift in thousands of useful inventions and great ideas, fairy tales, philosophies, and, perhaps even more, fads and follies, distorted bat-like fancies, illusions, madnesses. It is essentially chaotic, illogical, and romantic. It is ill-defined in its being, hospitable to novelty, paradoxical. It is a country where men are continually flying to extremes that meet again at the end of some unexpected rainbow. Everything you say of such people must promptly be completed by its opposite. No wonder the philosopher Hegel, who knew no other country, conceived the world-process as thesis—anti-thesis—synthesis. . . . Since the Germans have never formed an inwardly coherent nation, since what political cohesion they have possessed has always been imposed from without, they simply cannot tolerate tolerance or the purely intellectual limits of reason.

So, Mr. Mowrer explains, since 1918 "in the ruins of old beliefs, in the labyrinth of its great and tortured mind, it sought for a future that would somehow satisfy its beliefs in its own capacity and importance. Since it was unable to conceive a future independent of an idealized tradition, its historical anticipation took the form of a mighty reaction." This is a remarkable, and an original, analysis, and he who would combat it has his task cut out for him. Incidentally, Mr. Mowrer's explanation of the utterly disappointing alliance of the youth of Germany with the Hitler movement is that it is due to a "fundamental incapacity to stand unaided before the fearful uncertainty of life."

Since I have been myself criticized for attributing so much of the responsibility for the German lapse into reaction to the peacemakers at Versailles, I am happy to record the fact that Mr. Mowrer, too, attributes to the bad peace treaty, the resurgence of nationalism, "all because Clemenceau was a vindicative patriot; Wilson, an ignorant moralist; Lloyd George, a weak politican, and the German Republicans suffered from an inferiority complex." Certainly, Hitler has not created the nationalistic wave that has swept over Germany, nor have the reactionary, militaristic, and economic forces which backed and financed him and shielded him. Mr. Mowrer, himself, outlines the kind of conduct at Paris which would have made impossible the débâcle which we are now witnessing. How far this is to go no one may estimate at this hour, but that it is fraught with mischief and evil not only to the German people, but for the peace of Europe, is beyond question. Indeed, when these reactionary and militaristic forces took over Germany, first under Von Papen and then under General von Schleicher, and after that under Hitler, they made it impossible for Americans to claim that we actually achieved a single one of the claims for which we went to war in 1917.

Mr. Mowrer's book smacks considerably of the journalistic, which is perhaps both its strength and its weakness. It arrests the attention, but it also makes one wish that it was less staccato and that more space had been given to the solid achievements of the Republic, many of which are bound to endure, no matter what form of government finally comes to pass in Germany—Mr. Mowrer is certain that the period of reaction will pass in due course. Perhaps he would have been able to view the German scene with more detachment had he spent more time in America in recent years. If one could quarrel with him seriously about anything, it would be whether he doesn't overestimate the process of militarization that has been going on. Had he been in the United States, he would have found many of the same processes going on in our schools and colleges which he sets forth as taking place in Germany. It seems, too, as if he underestimated the tremendous weakness of Germany in all the trappings of war, such as tanks, transport vehicles, airplanes, high-caliber motorized artillery, siege guns, and all the rest of the appurtenances pertaining to a nation in arms which cannot possibly be improvized overnight—or while French airplanes are flying from Paris to Berlin.

But Mr. Mowrer has given such a forceful and so illuminating a picture of Germany since 1918 that one doesn't like to quarrel with him at all. Its essential soundness and justice will not be questioned by Americans.

Praise from Sir Hubert is praise, indeed, and Mr. Villard speaks as one who has himself just written in "The German Phœnix" one of the most enlightening books on present-day Germany.

HOBART, TASMANIA, ORIGINALLY A CONVICT SETTLEMENT.

The House of Comyns

PAGEANT: A Novel of Tasmania. By G. B. LANCASTER. New York: The Century Company. 1933. $2.50.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

FOR *most of us Tasmania is a long* way off, half lost somewhere under the bulk of Australia. Actually as G. B. Lancaster has written its rich chronicle in her new novel, "Pageant," it lies familiar in our own tradition and in the tradition of all that race which expanded miraculously across the world from the right seed of England. This book is the story of the tenacious people who not only took what they had come to find but also held desperately to the precious things they left behind them.

Few books are so accurately named as this one. It is not so much the apparent historical romance of the quarrelsome and graceful Comyns and the humorless and acquisitive Sorleys as it is a pageant. But it is a magnificent pageant, rich and tapestried in terms of their own romanticizing about themselves, of those English who came with their pretensions and their comparative poverty from the Peninsula Wars to build, as the English have built everywhere, a new world in fixed reflection of an old one.

Nevertheless from the sailing of gentlemen colonists and their ladies to take up grants in an empty land and from the coming of hulks full of convicts to the present, the story of Tasmania is unfolded through the lives of a succession of men and women. The century of its development passes in the three figures in the line of the Comyns who remain through all the changes of life and of standards aristocrats after an intensely romantic pattern of honor and integrity.

Madame Comyn, mother of the vast Comyn brood, rode to settlement in an oxcart but carried with her her crystal glasses, her French maid, aud her tradition. She finds only two of her blood in successive generations who embody her spirit. These two, Mab, her son, and Jenny, her granddaughter, are, under her eyes, which miss nothing, the protagonists in the two chief love stories of the book. The life and story of each of them is shaped around the worn romantic dogma of long fidelity in unrequited love. Against their decorated stories but equally romantic is that of Snow, who represents the exploited in a land flung open to exploitation and who, under his convict's garb, is a sensitive artist and a bitter gentleman.

Fortunately in this big character-crowded book the heroics of these chief figures are relieved by other actors whose personalities are built more stoutly in humor. The belligerent Captain Comyn who gave away all he made and antagonized whomever he pleased with his public rages over public affairs, is a fine contrast in humorous treatment to his witty and worthless son, Oliver, who antagonized nobody and lived upon whomever he could. Even the few essentially tragic characters of the book are drawn in irony. There is humor like that made by a Shakespearean fool in Ellen Merrick who went mad after rebelling secretly from parental selfishness by having a lover even if he was a convict and afterwards possessing a company of imaginary lovers in the shadows. Less close to tragedy is Celeste, the French maid, who pilfered steadily for her return to Paris only to die instead, irritated about it, among her thefts.

All of these and others in the beautifully detailed book are sharply drawn for pageant if not for life. Against the country and the moving century, the characters seem only people who pass. Their lives and their dramas seem like floats in the movement of a parade. The parade goes on: colonists and convicts, ladies and gentlemen, officers in Her Majesty's army, bush rangers and sheep herders and harlots and dealers in tallow and hides. The parade will go on after the book is ended. It began with a race reshaping itself. It continues in a growing commonwealth. Beside these the little romantic loves of Mab and Jenny, the matings and frustrations of others, even the tenacious preoccupation with life and blood of Madame Comyn seem very thin stuff. A race of aristocrats will go on even if it has to fortify itself by alliances with the brewers of beer. For all her apparent concern with romance, the author knows this and very deftly tells it steadily.

This is the first book in fourteen years from G. B. Lancaster, which is the pen name of Edith J. Lyttleton. The Literary Guild has made it its February selection.

It is reported that Gogol's great novel, "Dead Souls," has been dramatized and staged by the Moscow Art Theatre.

The Saturday Review of LITERATURE

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A Man Like Men

THE BULPINGTON OF BLUP. By H. G. WELLS. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1933. $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THE creator of Kipps and Mr. Polly has turned from his long preoccupation with men like gods, magnificent and humorless creatures, to give us a splendidly satiric portrait of a man like men—for his distinguishing trait which is here dissected at length is common in greater or less degree to mankind, *menschliches allzu menschliches.*

H. G. WELLS.

Thedore Bulpington is a boy who tells himself stories about how noble and glorious he is, and he never outgrows this habit. As a schoolboy, talking of the clipped and slurred pronunciations of English place names, he humorously contracts his native Blayport into "Blup," and from that time on his destiny is fixed: whatever he does, he is always "The Bulpington of Blup," a heroic figure, in his own mind. The realm of Blup gives him plenty of scope; it can successively resemble Camelot, Sherwood, Ruritania, and the frontier of India; and Theo, almost convinced by his imagination that he is really The Bulpington of Blup, never has to distinguish himself or even exert himself in the waking world. The Bulpington of Blup, like Mr. Hyde, becomes another self that he cannot get away from; even when in his adolescence, under the wholesome influence of some scientific friends, he tries for a little to accustom himself to look at things as they are, he immediately drops into saying to himself, "It ill beseems the Bulpington of Blup to flee the harsh visage of reality." As he grows up, of course, the mythical Blup recedes into the background, but he retains the habit of spinning himself stories in which there is some confusion between the great deeds he is going to do and the great deeds he pretends he has done; and he is unfortunately able to transmute, in retrospect, the most cowardly or caddish actions into worthy parts of the Blup Saga.

Nearly all the influences under which Theodore grows up are of a kind to encourage him in his daydreaming. His family has enough money so that nobody in it does any real work; his father is nominally engaged on an enormous history of the Varangians, but there is scarcely a complete sentence to be found at the time of his death: Mr. Bulpington is merely a vaguely artistic figure, in touch with all the artistic and advanced thought of the day. As Theodore grows up he encounters a certain Wimperdick, who will be generally identified with Mr. G. K. Chesterton, but who has, I think, touches of Mr. Hilaire Belloc as well, and under his influence almost becomes a Roman Catholic; but finding that there is another branch of the Catholic Church which is as picturesque as Rome (which is, of course, all he cares for), without being so exigent, he contentedly calls himself an Anglican without ever finding out more about the church of his choice. The war finally confirms him as an inhabitant of Blup. He enlists, in time to escape conscription, spends his training time indulging in delightfully sentimental heroics, manages to sprain a knee, and keeps out of harm's way till the end of the struggle, from which he emerges with an entirely mythical captaincy. Next he encounters the influence of Mr. T. S. Eliot, is confirmed in his position as royalist, classicist, and Anglo-Catholic, and for a time runs a little review in Paris, divided between neo-Catholicism, obscenity, and unintelligibility.

There is also provided, as a foil, a family of scientists, to show the pure devotion to truth whose absence is the complete death and damnation of Theodore Bulpington. Except at the outbreak of the war, when Theo's contemporary Teddy insists that the only important thing is to preserve the intellect, and the only solution pacifism, they are never very convincing, and as the story progresses they drop more and more out of sight. Mr. Wells seems to have finally pinned his faith on science—not on socialism any more, nor economics, nor education as that is managed now, but on pure, abstract science. This is a sad book, though a very funny one; one feels as one reads it that the author has seen many convictions break with him, and that his devotion to science is a council of last resort.

Indeed, it is notable that the book, with some exceptions, parallels what might have been the development of its author's open mind, if he had been born in other circumstances. When Mr. Wells was young, the advanced, artistic, Shavian household of the Bulpingtons must have seemed to him just what a household of the intelligent should be; and in Theodore's heroics at the beginning of the war there is a certain wry-mouthed reminiscence of the sentiments of Mr. Britling. And in these passages, in which Mr. Wells's hero is holding positions (no matter how bad his reasons are) which Mr. Wells himself once held, there is much more of the book's blasting humor than in the passages in which Mr. Wells attacks something like Catholicism with which he has never sympathized. Wimperdick, for instance, as a caricature of Mr. Chesterton, defeats its own end; for no one who knew Mr. Chesterton's writings, but did not know the literary history of the last few years, would ever recognize it. Wimperdick is made out hopelessly stupid; and no matter how much you disagree with Mr. Chesterton, you can hardly expect him to talk like a hopelessly stupid man. Again, in discussing Theodore's Parisian review, Mr. Wells suggests that the reason why Theodore liked entirely incomprehensible pieces of proce was that Theodore was personally annoyed with two scientists, who put things clearly, and therefore he himself would put things obscurely—which is hardly a convincing explanation for even isolated instances of the stream-of-consciousness manner.

In most of the book, however, in ridiculing Theodore's cowardly evasions, Mr. Wells seems to be taking leave also of younger and romantic convictions of his own, until his conclusions appear to be that science is the only sincere and safe force, and that that is what our education ought to consist of. This will hardly do; the truth about the physical world is an excellent thing, and we cannot have too much of it, provided our philosophy keeps pace with it; but if history since 1914 shows anything, it shows that devotion to abstract truth is powerless to tell what to do with the forces it uncovers; and false as many prophets have been, still our hope must be with social philosophy or with religion. It is better to have reached conclusions, even wrong ones, about the soul and the state, as Mr. T. S. Eliot has done, by a process of reasoning (for which Mr. Wells does not give him credit) than to say with Mr. Wells's scientific character Broxted that the world must manage itself, his business is in his laboratory.

But our grandchildren will be reading this book, not because of its views on contemporary individuals or society, but because it is a piece of universal and blindingly keen satire. There is in the book a character, Theodore's successful rival for his lady's hand, scientifically trained, vigorous—one would say, the most complete antithesis to Theodore that the author could draw; but even he says of Theodore, the Bulpington of Blup, "There, but for the grace of God, go I." And that is what every one may say, in reading it—or perhaps, "There, notwithstanding the grace of God, do go I." Every man, it has been said, can find himself in Sir Willoughby Patterne, and every woman too; and the same thing is true of The Bulpington of Blup. Every one who has indulged in daydreams, every one who has smoothed out his recollections of his own conduct, will find his fault here writ large. Theodore Bulpington is a universal type, and, perhaps because of our tendency to pity ourselves, a pathetic one in spite of his good-for-nothingness. The title is a little to be regretted; it is a pity it is such a tongue-twister, and "Blup" so uncompromising a syllable, for this book ought to add a word to the language, "Bluppery" like "quixotry" or "Bulpingtonian" like "Pecksniffian"; awkward as those mouthfuls are, it is a word we shall need.

Wedding Morning

CHEERFUL WEATHER FOR THE WEDDING. By JULIA STRACHEY. New York: The Viking Press. 1933. $1.50.

Reviewed by DAVID GARNETT

THIS is a very small book but a very perfect one revealing a rich sense of humor and very great literary and dramatic skill. The situation of a girl on her wedding morning trying to stifle her doubts and dull her knowledge that she is making a frightful mistake, is painful, the collection of ill-assorted and for the most part indifferent guests who have gathered together on the bright and bitter March morning is as agonizing and as inappropriate as such a crisis in life itself. Yet as in life, everything is made bearable by the comic way in which the tragedy occurs, and the book is funny, not with the humor of literature, but with the desperate funniness of the most painful things in life.

Technically the most striking thing in the book is the way in which one is kept aware of all the characters at the same time. They are all moving about simultaneously, it seems, like people on the stage. For these reasons I think "Cheerful Weather for the Wedding" is a very promising piece of work indeed, and I have been puzzled to find several people who could see nothing in it.

The chief reason for this, I think, is because the characters, like people in life and unlike those in most books, are feeling emotions conventionally inappropriate to their circumstances, and a second reason is that there is no one with whom the reader can possibly wish to identify himself. But I should not be surprised if the story were to appeal more to Americans than to English people, for there is, I think, a greater gulf between the older and younger generation in America.

But whether it hang fire or prove a success, I am convinced that "Cheerful Weather for the Wedding" is something really new and first-rate and I believe that Julia Strachey will turn out to be an important writer of the future.

An educational journal in Paris has been asking a number of children to imagine that they are candidates for the Chamber of Deputies and to draw up suitable Appeals to the electorate.

These are some of the results:—

If you vote for me you will receive twenty francs.

I promise that there shall be no more wars or revolutions, and no more taxes to pay.

I will reduce the cost of goods and abolish Customs duties. I will organize splendid fêtes. Everyone shall drink wines and liqueurs.

If you vote for me, I will vote for you.

There will be no more unemployed and no more poor people. Everyone will have electricity, and there will be no more war.

French Society

A MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE. By ANNE GREEN. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1933. $2.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

IT might perhaps be interesting to know just how much influence the intense gloom of Mr. Julien Green's work has had upon that of his persistently light hearted sister. Is it in reaction from the hopelessly sordid lives of his characters and the cheerless atmosphere of all his books that her people, both in "The Selbys" and in her new novel, indulge in almost infantile practical jokes, are full of enthusiasm no matter what their cirumstances, and arrive at last at a happy ending obviously delayed only by the necessity of spinning the story out to the proper length? Lacking clues for this investigation, it is at least evident how little there is directly comparable in the Gallic Mr. Green's methods and those of the more Anglo-Saxon Miss Green.

Yet both possess to an unusual degree the power of creating strongly individual characters, and both are experts on the various phases of French society. The principal charm of Miss Green's new book, in fact, is the accuracy of her descriptions, first of the bourgeois *milieu* in which her heroine is brought up, and then of the French equivalent of "county" circles into which her grandmother introduces her. The story itself is not unamusing, but serves largely as a convenient pretext for some brilliant variations on the subject of French character and institutions,—the intangibles which make France today the most homogeneous of nations. From all this Miss Green draws material for comedy of the particular sort familiar to readers of "The Selbys." It is not, perhaps, a very subtle or unusual sort of humor, but it is set down with likable enthusiasm and vivacity. Best of all, Miss Green has the quality most essential in a writer of light fiction: the ability to keep things going. There are few static interludes in "A Marriage of Convenience," and consequently

ANNE GREEN

it is decidedly successful in what it sets out to do.

In only one instance does the author resort to a deeper shading, possibly in the hope of thereby making still brighter the picture as a whole. This is in the sincere portrait of the downtrodden mother of the heroine, so desperately anxious to do the right thing for her more aggressive family. Rightly, her woes are not stressed, but her presence in the book, with the unforgettable description of her ghastly effort to entertain at "le five o'clock," goes to prove that Miss Green possesses the real stuff of tragi-comedy and can make one feel for her characters as well as laugh at them.

Finally, it may be noted that Miss Green clings to the short-breathed, deliberately ungrammatical style, oblivious of punctuation, with which she began her career. As a mannerism it is bearable, but adds nothing to the general scheme of her novel. Surely after publishing four books she should be able to form sentences correctly without destroying the effect of spontaneity which she is no doubt trying to obtain.

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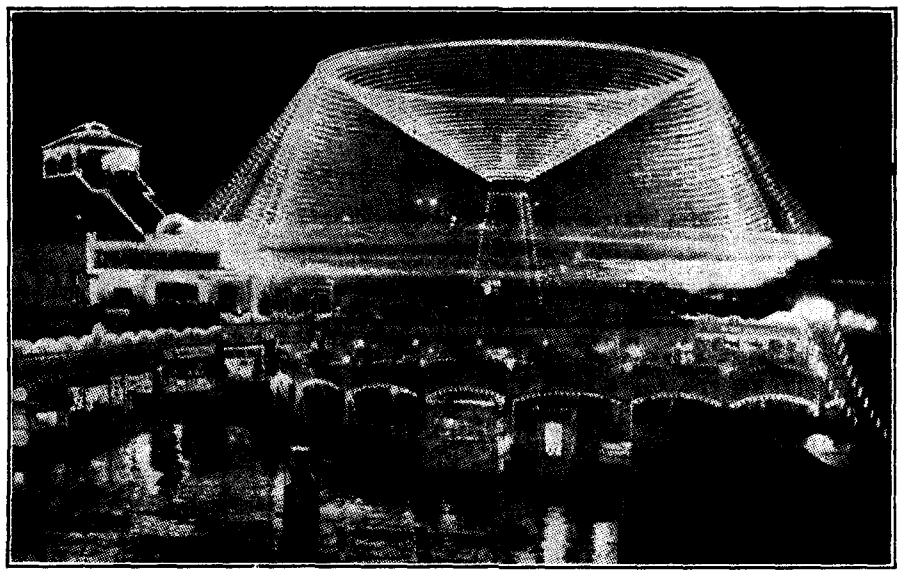

VIRTUAL VOLUME.
Reproduced from "The New Vision."

The Art of the Machine

THE NEW VISION: From Materials to Architecture. By L. MOHOLY-NAGY. Translated by DAPHNE HOFFMAN. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1932. $5.

Reviewed by CLAUDE BRAGDON.

MOHOLY-NAGY belongs to that group of European architects and craftsmen which numbers among its representatives such men as Le Corbusier, Gropius, Wijderveld, Taut. Their avowed aim is to re-form and reconstruct all the bases of our art and of our knowledge in accordance with the needs of a world into which a new factor has entered—the machine.

Unlike some others who fly this particular banner, Mr. Moholy-Nagy is concerned not alone with learning what the machine can teach, with carrying its precisions and economies into new fields—particularly the field of architecture—but with undoing some of the harm which a machine-civilization has wrought. He would do this by means of a new integration which shall restore to man something of the keenness of sense-perception, the resourcefulness, the creativeness, which were his before the gigantic shadow of the machine-age fell across his path.

Such a process, naturally, must begin with the child; therefore the author's first concern is with education. To this reviewer the first section of the book, "The Educational Side," is by far the most interesting and convincing—it ought to be published separately and circulated as a tract. He states the predicament of the modern industrialized man as follows:

The creative human being knows, and suffers from the realiztion, that the deep values of life are being destroyed under pressure from without (moneymaking, competition, trade mentality). He suffers from the purely material evaluation of his vitality, and from the flattening out of his instincts, from the impairing of his biological balance.

The author concludes that the injuries worked by a technical civilization should be combatted by "the propulsive observation of the organic, biologically conditioned functions (science, education, politics), and by means of the constructive carrying forward of our over-scientific culture—since there is no turning backward."

In essence, the entire book is an exposition and commentary upon the ways and means whereby these purposes may be accomplished. However, in looking over the illustrations of things done (in painting, sculpture, stagecraft, architecture) one is conscious of a distinct drop, the theory seems so much better than the practice—though here and there are glimmers of a new and extraordinary beauty.

As is usual in books of this general class, wherein photography exceeds its function—which is truthful representation—there is a certain amount of tricked photography. Sometimes it would seem as though modern photography were performing the same function in regard to modern architecture and design as does pornography to modern literature—"selling" it but at the same time corrupting it. But these observations, though provoked by "The New Vision," are not strictly germaine to it. The book is really an able and important contribution to a most vital subject.

More of the Grecian Urn

THE BRIDE OF QUIETNESS, AND OTHER PLAYS. By OSCAR W. FIRKINS. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press. 1932. $2.

THE REVEALING MOMENT, AND OTHER PLAYS. The same.

Reviewed by ROBERT WARNOCK

WHAT tale did that sylvan historian tell, unravish'd through the ages of slow Time? What bold lover was denied his kiss by the cruel permanence of stone? Keats was content to ask with drowsy indifference to answers, but a modern playwright of more prying imagination has read the mysteries of the Grecian Urn and chronicled them with wit and poetry in a charming play.

She was the merest female, that ancient maiden forever fair, debating capriciously between two suitors, and when she scampered off with the mighty hunter for a front-row seat at the holiday sacrifice, Philotas, the disappointed sculptor, condemned her as his stone figure to centuries of tantalizing nearness to her lover's lips, a nearness never satisfied. But the playwright has been kinder to his fickle Chione. In a flexible blank verse that flows through lively dialogue and passages of lyric flight, he follows the Urn through five stages of its career to a miracle that completes the lover's embrace after weary centuries of waiting.

Mr. Firkins had an uncommon talent for the one-act play. Those who remember "Two Passengers for Chelsea" will welcome these posthumous collections, for there is here the same brilliant dialogue and subtle skill in recreating characters. He wrote for the seasoned reader, bringing to life vividly the great ones of letters in arresting situations.

The four playlets in "The Bride of Quietness" reflect wide range within a narrow field. "The King's Vigil" is a jolly farce about Samuel Pepys, while "Empurpled Moors" paints serious portraits of the whole strange Brontë family in a striking domestic scene. "Turnpikes in Arcady" is a sprightly dialogue between the lovelorn Brownings, newly escaped to Italian skies from the angry clouds of Wimpole Street. It is intellectual banter of a delightful sort, but sometimes so involved and prolonged that it threatens the action of the play and the reality of the characters.

"The Revealing Moment" roams through Continental letters. Sometimes the theme is an intellectual problem, Mérimée's quest for reality or Chekhov's choice between love and careers. Sometimes it is a serious study of a turning-point, Euripides winning over the son of Sophocles, or Chateaubriand's departure for the army. But at its most delightful, it is merely racy talk, done with the lightest, gayest touch. Ibsen's quarrel with Björnsön and the comic scene in the Dumas household are excuse enough for owning the book.

Mr. Firkins had an almost dangerous fondness for subtle turns of idea more suited to the library than the playhouse. But the charm of his plays is no less real for being delicate and easily lost. He is at his best with famous characters ready created for him, whom he knew with the affectionate insight of long association. He wrote of them humanly, with the imagination of a poet and the briskness of a skilful playwright.

Sara Teasdale

1884-1933

By LOUIS UNTERMEYER

THE death of Sara Teasdale, on January 28th, affects me so deeply, so privately, that it seems an indignity to write about her at all. Yet write I must, if only to dissipate the cloud which was flung over her during the last few years. The cloud I refer to was not her illness, for she had never been a robust person, nor was it her semi-isolation, for she never pretended to be a publicized author or even a public person. It was a cloud of prettiness which, not in the least native to her spirit, was put upon her.

When Sara Teasdale first came East from Saint Louis with a handful of clear and candid lyrics, none would have believed she would become the most popular woman poet of the decade. The early "Helen of Troy and Other Poems" (1911) revealed a self-sustaining lyricism and a blank verse that was as musical as her rhymes, but, though the volume was praised, no one predicted the fervor which would accompany her subsequent books. Her work was both traditional and anticipatory. Amy Lowell had not yet published a volume; Edna St. Vincent Millay, an eighteen year old girl on the sea-coast of Maine, was beginning to write "Renascence," and her first book was not to be printed for another six years; Elinor Wylie was an unknown name. Within a few months, Sara Teasdale became the most loved poet of her generation; anticipating the "new era in American poetry," she became a part of it. Her "Rivers to the Sea," "Love Songs," "Flame and Shadow" were esteemed as highly by the critics as by the casual and uncritical readers. Her unaffected quatrains, sparing of metaphor and almost bare of imagery, attracted a great following. They were set to music a hundred times; they crowded the anthologies; lovers regarded the author of "I Shall Not Care" and "Spring Night" as their uncrowned laureate. A few noted her kinship to Lizette Woodworth Reese, but, almost always, she was compared with Christina Rossetti and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. One of her books ("Love Songs") vied in popularity with "The Rubaiyat" and received the two most coveted prizes awarded in America.

In the late nineteen twenties popular taste underwent another of its unpredictable and inevitable metamorphoses. The fashion turned to keener edges, subtler byplay, a more shadowy metaphysic. Sara Teasdale was considered over-sweet, over-emphatic if not over-emotional, suspiciously démodé. This was unfortunate and even ironic, for her later work is not only her most thoughtful but her best. "Dark of the Moon" (1926) is slower-paced than anything she ever wrote, more avowedly autumnal. Yet even the outspoken clarity and the flexible cadences of "Flame and Shadow," which was the climax of her earlier work, are scarcely as compelling as the proud acceptance of change and the sombre reflections which add new dignity to the old lyricism.

This later poetry suggests, though it never quite reveals, that other aspect of Sara Teasdale which few, even among her intimates, ever came to know. It is a pity that those who know only the Colin-Strephon period of her work know little of the other self who learned French so she could read Proust, who admired Joyce and Jeffers, and who, at the time of her death, was at work on a dispassionate biography of Christina Rossetti and a selection of that poet's more resonant work. Those who charged her with being sentimental failed to realize that Sara Teasdale's quality was the translation of sentiment into sensibility, not into sentimentality, which is only the exploiting and cheapening of sentiment—the "professional language of emotion" as Edith Sichel says, without the emotion to inspire it.

Of this emotion Sara Teasdale had a surplus, but it was emotion stiffened with austerity, even, at times, with scorn. I had often urged her to give freer expression to this stifled detachment—stifled, at least, in most of her work. A poem she subsequently sent me is her answer, as well as a quiet reproof, and since it so perfectly expresses her mature attitude, I quote it here:

My heart has grown rich with the passing of years,
I have less need now than when I was young
To share myself with every comer,
Or shape my thoughts into words with my tongue.

It is one to me that they come or go
If I have myself and the drive of my will,
And strength to climb on a summer night
And watch stars swarm over the hill.

Let them think I love them more than I do;
Let them think I care though I go alone;
If it lifts their pride, what is it to me,
Who am self-complete as a flower or a stone.

It is such verse that has what one must recognize as authenticity. And authenticity, rather than originality, was the gift which will, I believe, preserve a score of her simple poems long after much more pretentious work has perished. The best of her lyrics are fresh without being freakish; they are not dependent on the technical innovations or the manner of the moment. She was no Sibyl; her muse was frankly communicative. Hers was not the spell of strangeness and surprise, but the more immediate and more abiding charm of recognition.

SARA TEASDALE.

A fund of detailed information concerning the housing and general social conditions of two and a half million of London's population is contained in recently published volumes III and IV of the "New Survey of London Life and Labor," according to the London *Observer*. That paper says: "This monumental work is being undertaken by the London School of Economics, under the direction of Sir Hubert Llewellyn Smith, and is designed on similar lines to the seventeen-volume survey written by Charles Booth and published between 1889 and 1903. The new survey was started in 1928, and will be completed in 1934 with the publication of the eighth volume. Of the scope and significance of the volumes Sir Hubert Llewellyn Smith said:

'In volume III we endeavor to present a comprehensive record of social and economical conditions in the eastern half of the London area, which includes a population of nearly two and a half millions. Volume IV consists of maps illustrating the local distribution of poverty and welfare, street by street, throughout the whole area. For the first time an overcrowding map has been produced.'"

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The Bowling Green

The Folder

I HAVE occasionally spoken here of the various so-called portraits of Shakespeare, and not long ago reproduced one which pleased me from a cigar-box. The gruesome Droeshout frontispiece in the First Folio has always been a grievance to Shakespeare students. I am glad to find that Mr. J. Dover Wilson, in his vigorous little book *The Essential Shakespeare* (Macmillan), smartly reproaches the Droeshout engraving, and the Stratford bust from which it was presumably sketched, for the damage they have done to our notion of the poet. "They stand between us and the true Shakespeare, and are so obviously false images of the greatest poet of all time that the world turns from them in disgust and thinks it is turning from Shakespeare himself." Mr. Wilson offers, in substitute, a portrait of an unknown young man, Shakespeare's exact contemporary, which was discovered in 1907 and now hangs in the Rylands Library at Manchester. There is nothing whatever, Dover Wilson is prompt to remark, to connect this "unknown youth of the wonderful eyes and the oval Shelley-like face" with Shakespeare, but he points out the pleasant coincidence that both the Droeshout face and this unknown portrait are identical in many proportional measurements.

It was probably Ben Jonson's rhyme about the Droeshout portrait that caused it to be taken so seriously; and yet my own notion has always been that Ben was joking. He himself, who had known the man, must have been struck by the inadequacy of that equine face, and he wrote:—

> This Figure, that thou here seest put
> It was for gentle Shakespeare cut;
> Wherein the Graver had a strife
> With Nature, to out-do the life.

Surely when Ben Jonson wrote *out-do* he was twitting the engraver? "Out-do" need not necessarily mean to surpass or to improve on; it might also mean to *do out*, to extinguish, to obliterate.—Those whose professional concerns sometimes bring them into controversy with engravers will not be surprised if Ben allowed himself a word of chaff.

"About any one so great as Shakespeare," said T. S. Eliot in one of the superbly witty essays in his recently collected volume, "it is probable that we can never be right; and if we can never be right, it is better that we should from time to time change our way of being wrong." It seems to me entirely in Shakespeare's character, and in the character of the vast myth-literature that has grown up about him, that he should be known to the world only in an effigy which probably doesn't look the least bit like him. He knew the value of low visibility, and he kept his secrets in the shrewdest way—by putting them in the mouths of others. The best-kept secrets are those that are never suspected as secrets because they're told to the whole world. As far as himself was concerned, Shakespeare admitted that he went here and there and made himself a motley to the view. By that he may have meant a clown, or he may have meant something rather more like a chameleon, or camouflage. Meanwhile, to get his number you have to watch his words (and those of his friends) much more carefully than some readers suspect. When Jonson and the others called him "gentle" they didn't mean anything soft or easy (compare Lamb's annoyance at being called the gentle Elia). They meant high in breeding and quality; quick, aware. You remember that Skelton spoke of Mistress Margaret as "gentle as falcon or hawk." And when his contemporaries spoke of Shakespeare's "sugared" sonnets perhaps they didn't mean saccharine. One suddenly remembers that confectioners have always loved to spin sugar into all sorts of fantastic shapes and colors.

My own idea is that it is best for the student to draw his own portrait of Shakespeare—basing it on the traditional likeness but developing the features as seems most pleasing. When I drew mine, I left the dome of his skull open at the top, to suggest room enough for his all-ranging fancy.

Dover Wilson's brisk little book is a happy addition to any shelf of the relatively few studies that have accepted Shakespeare as a human being. He helps to redress a badly tipped balance when he insists on Will's comic genius. It is too often forgotten, Wilson says, that:—

> Shakespeare was once young. Indeed, he was never old; for he gave up writing at forty-eight and was only fifty-two when he died. Yet for most people he is a kind of Grand Old Man of literature. . . . The general trend of Shakespearian criticism since Coleridge has concentrated upon the tragedies and has left the comedies and histories in comparative neglect. Thus we have come to think of him as preëminently a tragic poet, facing the vastidity of the universe. . . .

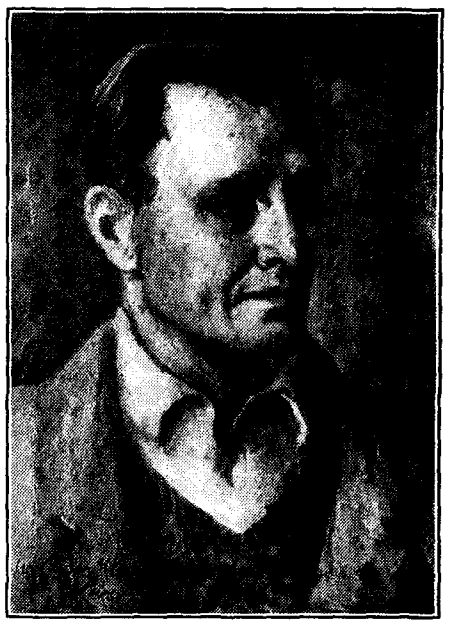
(I wish, in passing, that Mr. Wilson hadn't broken a fine passage with that word *vastidity*.) . . . But he goes on to mention certain elements of both Keats and Dostoievsky in the Shakespeare temperament, and admirably reminds us that during at least half of Shakespeare's career he expressed himself "in comedies without a parallel in the world's literature for gaiety of heart . . . with all the verve and gusto of their gay indecorum, who that reads them can doubt that they have been cast up on the shores of time by the most impetuous tide of warm-blooded humanity that ever beat through the heart of men?"

I have only just learned that Harrison & Smith, in Minneapolis, printed last year a private edition (500 copies) of the brilliant essay *Man: A Character Sketch*, by the late O. W. Firkins. Professor Firkins, one of the most highly valued contributors this *Review* ever had, read this remarkable paper—we might call it an essay in spiritual anthropology—at a club in Minneapolis just before his death in March 1932. I wish this fine thing might be made available to a wider public. I quote a few lines of Professor Firkins's sketch of the qualities and attributes of Homo:—

> The truth is that few amusements hold him beyond those in which he actively participates. I except football; I except pugilism: but, in general, this restless and nimble being abhors passivity. His fun is action, because he wants to feel, not other people, but himself. He sleeps in church, he nods in the theatre. In a Six O'clock Club, where the members are mostly passive, the most popular item in the constitution is the by-law which closes the meeting at eight o'clock sharp. Reading is too passive. Enormous as the outgush of print is, man is not inherently a reading animal. Few men can read anything but newspapers; few women can read anything but novels. Man has indeed small comfort either in the page or pen; he is too active to read, and he is too lazy to write. The action that he craves must be voluntary. His play, if his soul forsakes it, becomes work; his work, if his soul passes into it, becomes a play.

I am of the opinion that we haven't heard enough about Harold Nicolson's novel *Public Faces*. It is intensely amusing , but also something more than that. It is perhaps handicapped by a jacket which gives very little inkling of what sort of book it is. Like Mr. Nicolson's memorable *Some People*, it is a scherzo at the expense of international diplomacy. It describes the great crisis of June 1939, which, entirely unpremeditated, brought the five greatest nations to the brink of war. How, also by the comedy of chance and the unauthorized intervention of underlings, this war was averted, is Mr. Nicolson's story.

"Great Britain," Mr. Nicolson quotes a French statesman, "is a phenomenon which could properly be comprehended only by extreme eccentrics." Perhaps a tinge of eccentricity is needed to relish all Mr. Nicolson's little japes, which require a fairly solid grounding in governmental ways, and in British social comedy. His American allusions, where he does not (or did not) know his local color, are less fortunate. Surely, Mr. Nicolson, it was not necessary to afflict President Hans P. Scholle (in 1939) with acne? But it's a novel of continuously subtle entertainment—and also of some bitterly valid satire. Certainly it should be a Best Seller in Washington.



OLIVER H. PERRY
(1883-1933)
From a portrait by Waldo Peirce.

A client in Kansas City writes of the death of Professor Saintsbury:—

> Last night, giving a second look to the Sunday *Star*, a brief paragraph came with a shock and a sense of personal loss. Suddenly the right-hand corner of the second bookshelf stood out with pain mixed with the pride and pleasure. The *Scrap Books* I, II, and III; the glorious *Notes on a Cellar Book*, the precious *Letter Book*, the *History of English Prose Rhythm*, the *Specimens of English Prose Style*. The first one of the *Scrap Books* opens of itself to page 185, and I send from it a coal to Newcastle. You might not have it exactly in your vest pocket, so here it is.
>
> Years ago I wrote a letter to Professor Saintsbury, but I never sent it. Somehow I hadn't the courage, or impertinence. It was in my first grateful and enthusiastic acquaintance, and I remember copying William Rose Benét's poem "Night," hoping to show him that we, too, sometimes could boast a poem.
>
> I note that another scholar, J. M. Robertson, died in London a few days ago. Him I knew from certain articles in the *Criterion*. My file of the *Criterion* is almost as valuable as anything on the shelves.
>
> But there will be no more of the leisurely discursive feet-on-the-fender good talk of the doughty and delicious old Tory Saintsbury. "Ripeness is all," one thinks and remembers.

MAUDE V. P. HAZELTON.

Mrs. Hazelton's enclosure was the medieval Latin poem:—

> An amor dolor sit,
> An dolor amor sit,
> Utrumque nescio,
> Hoc unum sentio—
> Jocundus dolor est
> Si dolor amor est.

And Professor Saintsbury's accompanying footnote was, "I do not know in what other language to find such a combination of neatness and sweetness in phrase, of terseness and unmonotonous tautology in words, of simplicity and poignancy in music."

Our correspondent also encloses F. S. Flint's graceful version:—

> Whether love be pain,
> Or pain love be,
> I have no leisure
> To inquire. To me
> The pain is pleasure
> If love pain be.
>
> And if I love her
> And she be pain,
> Would I recover
> And love the pain
> And be no lover
> And whole again?
>
> No, I must cherish
> Her, come what may,
> Although I perish
> From day to day:
> While the love I cherish
> The pain can stay.

HORATIUS AT THE STAIRS

Woman continues her triumphant march; witness the following excerpts from a circular sent to members of the Oxford and Cambridge Club, London. But the good old varsities can be pushed ju[illegible] so far; they put up their last stand at th[illegible] foot of the "grand staircase":—

> The Committee find that there is a increasing demand for the provision of accommodation for the entertainment of Ladies as the guests of members. A considerable number of members have announced their intention of resigning from the Club if this accommodation is not provided. . . . In view of these considerations, the Committee came to the conclusion that the provision of a ladies' annex is essential to the future prosperity of the Club. . . . If the scheme is adopted, ladies will not be admitted so far into the Club premises as is permitted at present, for whereas they are now admitted to the lobby at the foot of the grand staircase, in future they would not be allowed to ascend the staircase which leads up to the coffee room.

The Turnbull Memorial Lectures on Poetry at Johns Hopkins University were given this year by T. S. Eliot, who spoke on The "Metaphysical" Poets. Among Mr. Eliot's predecessors on this distinguished foundation have been Edmund Clarence Stedman, Richard Jebb, Charles Eliot Norton, Ferdinand Brunetière, George Woodberry, G. L. Kittredge, Sir Walter Raleigh, Walter de la Mare, and George W. Russell (Æ).

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

The Saturday Review Recommends

This Group of Current Books:

PAGEANT. By G. B. LANCASTER. *Century.*
A romantic tale playing in Tasmania which is a vivid historical chronicle as well as a stirring story.

THE QUEST FOR POLAR TREASURES. By JAN WELZL. *Macmillan.*
More yarns of the Arctic.

THE ESKIMOS. By EDWARD MOFFAT WYER, JR. *Yale University Press.*
The inhabitants of the Arctic treated from the scientific point of view.

This Less Recent Book:

RIVERS TO THE SEA. By SARA TEASDALE. *Macmillan.*
A volume of lyric verse by the poet whose death last week was a sore loss to American poetry.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Fiction

A LADY WHO LOST. By ALICE BEAL PARSONS. Gotham House. 1933. $2.

In this novel, Mrs. Parsons seems to be asking what is to become of the lady, that exquisite, useless achievement of civilization, like contrapuntal music and double roses; or rather, she seems to be declaring that a lady, like a sword, is a beautiful object full of romantic associations, but quite useless and anachronistic today. The player of the title role in her book, Mrs. Rowe, is one of the few ladies, not old ladies, nor ladylike creatures, in recent fiction. Mrs. Parsons, with an exquisite urbanity of style, is exceptionally qualified to paint such a drawing-room portrait. Though she almost holds against Mrs. Rowe the mount of money that has been spent on her, on straightening her teeth and hardening her mind, to make her the perfection of type that she is, nevertheless she does her full justice.

Mrs. Rowe is not happy; ever since her marriage she has been lonely and aloof, for in the rich Westchester suburb to which she has come there are many women of wealth, but no other thoroughbreds; but it does not matter—if one is born a Spartan or a lady, one does not expect to be happy, one has other things. And when Mrs. Rowe's neighbor, Connie Brown, is suspected of murder, it is Mrs. Rowe alone, with the independence of the aristocrat, who takes her part.

But if the murder, the first scandal that breaks the smug content of the place, shows Mrs. Rowe at her best, the second, the strike, shows her at her worst. Mrs. Rowe is incapable of wanton cruelty to any living thing in particular, and just as incapable, by every quality of her mind and training, of extending human sympathy to Communists in the abstract—or of allowing them to come closer than the abstract to her. In treating this strike, the author shows the same commendable fairness that she does in displaying the good and bad qualities in Mrs. Rowe; she neither excuses nor blames her. One suspects, from the character of her writing, that her beautifully clear impartiality comes from the fact that she is an aristocrat by instinct and a democrat, or communist, by conviction; however that may be, it is a thing to be grateful for.

Mrs. Parsons's novel shows a quiet, deep perception in its thought that is in the best tradition of women authors, and a quiet humor and charm in the writing that are as pleasant as they are rare.

THE ROOT AND THE BOUGH. By FRANCINE FINDLEY. New York: Alfred H. King. 1933. $2.

"What is hidden in the earth, blossoms on the limb." Old Adam Burdett knew what it was but none of his thirteen children ever found it; it remained for his grandchild Merry to formulate it in so many words. There was a mystery about old Adam—he had not started life as a farmer, but he had made himself one. All through his life, his children knew there was something he wanted to impart to them, and after his death, Sarai, his widow, spent her remaining years trying to externalize that message, but the children all went their own way—they left the farm, they married elsewhere, they sought power over each other's lives, and that additional trait of Adam's brought all but David's wife to spiritual destruction. When David died, Celia came "home" to live, but she could not stay; the Burdetts were not her blood, there was something in the atmosphere of the place that convinced her Merry would be tainted, so she went back west.

But what was hidden in the root blossomed on the limb; Celia knew the Burdett in Merry would come out, and had foolishly tried to obliterate it by removing the environment. It came out, and before it had run its course, Merry knew unhappiness and maladjustment. Then she returned to the Burdett homestead, and she knew the answer to the riddle—the answer Celia had not found in old Adam's private chapel.

It is difficult not to encourage the author of a book so manifestly sincere as "The Root and the Bough," but Miss Finley has done little enough with a theme that is, in its essentials, valid. It is nothing short of pathetic to witness the transformation of ideas, moods, and emotions that in themselves could furnish a solid background for a solid story, to weary cliché phrases that ring in our ears like scraps of an old banal melody. Yet this transformation has been wrought under the author's hands. Earnest endeavor marks every page of the story, but there is no imagination here to lift these ancient counters and stamp them with new authenticity.

Miscellaneous

THE CULBERTSON WEBSTER CONTRACT SYSTEM. By *Ely Culbertson* and *T. T. Webster*. Stokes. $1.25.

THE INDIAN AS PEACEMAKER. By *Mabel Powers*. Revell. $2.

MATRIMONY. By *Edward Lucas White*. Norman.

SKETCHES FROM CAMBRIDGE. By *Leslie Stephen*. Oxford University Press. $1.75.

THE STRATEGY OF CITY CHURCH PLANNING. By *Ross Sanderson*. Institute of Social and Religious Research. $2.

HUMANITY'S GREATEST NEED. By *Hugh McCurdy Woodward*. Putnam. $2.50.

THE REAL NEW YORK. By *Helen Worden*. Bobbs-Merrill. $2.50.

RADIO ROUND-UPS. By *Joseph Gurman* and *Myron Slager*. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard. $1.

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF MATHEMATICS. By *Arthur F. Bentley*. Bloomington, Ind.: Principia Press.

NEW TYPES OF OLD AMERICANS at Harvard and at Eastern Women's Colleges. By *Gordon Townsend Bowles*. Harvard University Press. $2.50.

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"I say then, that he is exactly like the masks of Silenus, which may be seen sitting in the statuaries' shops, having pipes and flutes in their mouths; and they are made to open in the middle, and there are images of gods inside them"
PLATO: *Symposium*

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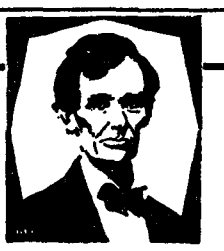

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

H. H. R., Long Island, wishes a book to be used as the basis of group reading on the Italian Renaissance, one to give coherence and direction to further reading, on which advice is also asked. It is a good while now since the Home University Library, the series of small, authoritative, and inspiring manuals for home reading and study, published here by Holt, added in 1914 Edith Sichel's little book, "The Renaissance," but I have found nothing brief for beginners that compares with it for clarity, poise, and a faculty of making sound statements without taking a dogmatic tone. Best of all, it fairly compels one, by rousing interest, to go on reading other books. "Story of the Renaissance," by W. H. Hudson (not the naturalist), is also published by Holt; it is made up of lectures and could be taken as a textbook for group study, as it is simple and explicit. Frederic Seebohm's "Era of the Protestant Revolution" (Longmans) is a fine study, in the smallest possible compass, of Renaissance and Reformation as twin movements. Preserved Smith's "Age of the Reformation" (Holt) relates the religious movement to the economic and intellectual revolutions of the sixteenth century; its style is eminently readable, and the men who appear in it are living creatures. One sees history as made by men.

Paul Van Dyke's "Age of the Renascence" (Scribner) is an outline of the history of the papacy from Avignon to the sack of Rome (1377-1527), one of a series of brief studies of epochs in church history. The same author's "Renaissance Portraits" (Scribner) should on no account be omitted from a reading list like this. "Civilization of the Renaissance," published by the University of Chicago, is a group of studies by J. W. Thompson, George Rowley, Ferdinand Schevill, and George Sarton, on explorations, society, science, and art of the epoch. Sylvia Benian's "From Renaissance to Revolution" (Dutton) considers the influence of the Renaissance upon the political development of Europe; from start to finish it spreads over seven centuries. David Hannay's "The Later Renaissance" (Scribner) is one of a series of studies of great periods of European literature. For color, speed, and a sense of the rich diversity of the time, the very style and method of Rachel Annand Taylor's "Invitation to Renaissance Italy" (Harper) is valuable; she is one of the writers whose scholarship will always be scrutinized with especial care by people who think that if a history is fascinating there must be something wrong with it. Her "Leonardo the Florentine" (Harper) is as crowded and joyous as a tapestry of the time. Meanwhile I trust that the local library owns Henry Osborn Taylor's "Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century" (Macmillan), into whose two large volumes one may dive and come up with treasure. All these books are in print in this country, and none are heavily expensive; several cost two dollars or less.

INTEREST in books dealing with loss of memory and the sense of identity continues, and O. I. S., Birmingham, Ala., sends word of an article in the *Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1917, "The Man Who Lost Himself." This is the author's account of his own lapse of memory, which lasted three or four years. "It would seem to be altogether reliable," the correspondent adds, "since the writer is Professor Cecil Fairfield Lavell, who is now and has been for about fifteen years on the faculty of Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa; he is included regularly in *Who's Who*. Other books useful to your correspondent are Jane Hillyer's 'Reluctantly Told,' published by Macmillan in 1926, relating experiences in an institution for the insane and the patient's return to sanity, and Marian King's story of a stay in hospital for treatment of the veronal habit, 'The Recovery of Myself" (Yale). May I mention also Arthur Schnitzler's 'Flight into Darkness'? It is a vivid and terrible picture of a mind in the process of becoming insane." *R. V. F., Arlington Hts., Ill.,* besides suggesting "Reluctantly Told," advises "The Locomotive God," William Ellery Leonard's story of lifelong obsession (Viking), and Emily Holmes Coleman's "Shutter of Snow" (Viking), "is vivid picture of a lost mind, containing many passages of poetical beauty," also, in this connection, Karl Menninger's "The Human Mind." To these I can add two studies in fictional form of the mental and spiritual phenomena accompanying starvation: one is Knut Hamsun's "Hunger" (Knopf), the other is one of the exquisite pieces in James Stephens's "Etched in Moonlight" (Macmillan), and I cannot so much as think of the title of either of them without feeling for the moment as hollow as a soapbubble.

I have had several calls within the past few weeks for reading-lists for children of various ages, all of which could be answered by "The Right Book for the Right Child" (Day), a book-length list with annotations, based on actual reports from over 100,000 children in 800 schools from pre-school years through junior high. This was made by a group of librarians chosen from the Children's Librarians Committee of the American Library Association working with the Research Department of the Wennetka Public Schools. These are books for children to read for and by themselves, which means that some books read to children at a fairly early age appear on lists for a later period. Some of us are bound to quarrel with this list, as we do with every list, not so much for what it puts in as for what it leaves out—but as a guide to what children in general seem to think about what they read it is chockful of information for their elders. All in all, it is a book to be pondered over by anyone interested in children's reading—or, for that matter, by anyone interested in leading children toward reading.

"Over two years," according to *John o' London's Weekly*, "have now been spent on the preparation of the British Museum library catalogue—and the compilers have not yet reached the end of the A's! The catalogue of the four million books will fill a hundred and sixty-five volumes, and will cost £500 to buy.

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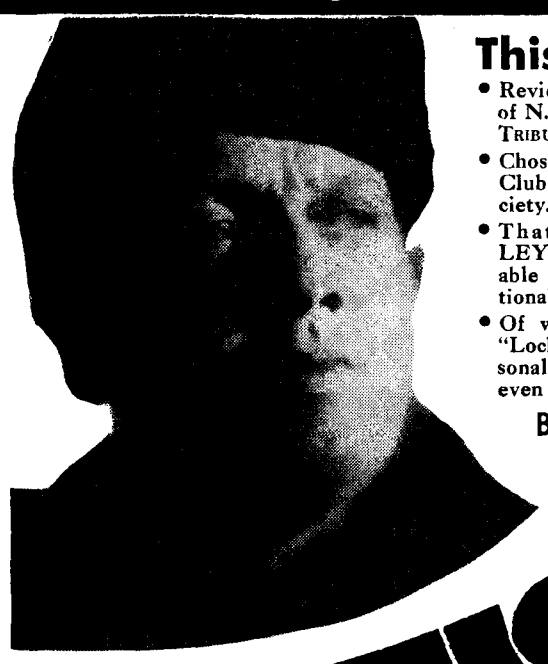

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(*This is continued from page* 428, *which please examine*)

vertiser only $2.38 (7c a word) and would have brought thousands of replies . . . yet there are possibilities just as alluring in the Personals which always find the reader in an unconventional and receptive mood. Though occasionally employed, it seems, for messages of private or esoteric import, the Personals are an ideal Bulletin Board for offers and transactions in tangible or intellectual goods, artistic properties, or personal services. Many small notices there inserted have brought surprising variety of consequences.

The conduct of the Personals column is confided to a Mermaid of proved discretion; copy should be received by Saturday noon for insertion in the following week's issue; remittance at 7c per word must accompany. An occasional freak is bound to creep in, but in general these Petites Annonces provide a valuable medium of exchange for both birthrights and pottages.

M. P. D., Personals Dept., *Saturday Review*, 25 W. 45.

Points of View

An Interesting Blunder

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: In his article on Technocracy in your issue of January 14, Mr. Archibald MacLeish deals in spirited fashion with the claims of Howard Scott and his satellites to scientific standing. But he himself proceeds to pronounce the doom of the existing economic order with an easy self-confidence that is by no means justified either by the facts to which he refers or by any indication that he has given the subject competent study. And in the very centre of his principal argument he makes a most curious and interesting blunder.

After dwelling with great emphasis on the loss of employment caused by the advance of modern technology, Mr. MacLeish goes on as follows:

> These facts were known and are known and have never been challenged. Such statements as those thrown against the technocrats, that the density of employment in the U. S. has actually increased from 383 per 1,000 in 1900 to 398 per 1,000 in 1930 mean nothing more than that men who used to work for themselves are no longer able to work for themselves but must now work for others, and were therefore in 1930 reported among the "employed" whereas in 1900 they were not so reported.

Now, if Mr. MacLeish's logical powers had been alert, he would have felt that there was, on its face, something fatally wrong about this explanation; for the figures he had been citing were cited to show how sadly technology had been cutting down the number of people who were working for others—the wage-workers in factories, railroads, mines, etc. He ought to have seen that if, in reality, between 1910 and 1930, the density of employment in the United States had increased while the number of employees in factories, railroads, etc., had diminished, the explanation (in so far as any simple explanation is inferable) must be the exact opposite of what he gives—it must be that a greater proportion of the people were working for themselves, and a smaller proportion for others, in 1930 than in 1910.

So much for the logic. Now for the facts. The figures of density and employment which Mr. MacLeish cites as having been "thrown against the technocrats" are based (whether correctly or not) upon the censuses of 1910 and 1930, and relate not to the number of wage-workers but to the total number of persons "gainfully occupied," whether working for themselves or for others, in all lines of industry, agriculture, business, the professions, domestic and public service, etc. There is, therefore, no room whatsoever for Mr. MacLeish's explanation of the figures.

Finally, any one with an instinctive perception of the significance of statistical numbers would have seen, on the very face of these data, that the numbers involved must cover the whole mass of breadwinners, and not merely the wage-earners. Whether the number is 383 out of 1,000 or 398 out of 1,000, it is about two-fifths of the entire population of the country. Does Mr. MacLeish imagine that two out of five of all the men, women, and children in the country are wage-earners?

FABIAN FRANKLIN.

New York City.

Boston, City of Light

To the Editor of the *Saturday Review:*

Sir: Mr. Howe's portrayal of Boston, appearing in a *Saturday Review* of recent date, is accurate and discriminating and might well be studied by anyone interested in his own mental and spiritual lineage. So studied it can be made a stimulus to growth.

What Polaris and Ursa Major are in comparison to the other stars and constellations, Boston is in the realms of the spirit when compared with the other spheres in which I have lived. I was born and raised in the Old South—Robert E. Lee, Henry Grady, Thomas Nelson Page, and Walter Hines Page are among the significant names there, and may I never detract from their places of worth either by word or by manner of life. My adult life has been spent in the West, out here where slowly but surely we are building an empire of things worth while and where convention can be flouted without loss of social status—Bret Harte, if we may claim him, David Starr Jordan, and Robinson Jeffers are the names we mention to visiting friends. I shall always honor these men, and cherish the things for which they stand. But it was really Boston which gave me a new birth in the values talked of by Mr. Howe, even though I never slept within the confines of the city more than a dozen nights in my life.

If you look upon Boston not as an exact geographical location but as a sphere of influence, it was there I went to school—seven years, from first year Latin to the Science of Society. It started this way. In the house in which we lived when I was a boy there was a spacious room used jointly as a kitchen, dining room, play room, and study, and in one corner a woodbox. Beside that box I used to whittle, read stories, and study. Above the box hung a picture of Oliver Wendell Holmes. Was there ever such a face on any other man? No boy, however full of life he might be, could look at that face regularly for two or three years and then utterly fail. It was just the face to write the "One Hoss Shay," "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," "Bill and Joe," and "The Boys." It was just the face to study puerperal fever with the resultant boon to womanhood. Holmes is only one of many Bostonians. When people say that Longfellow is less than a great poet, I remind them of "The Skeleton in Armour." A New England teacher once told me that Whittier was more of a versifier than a poet, but to me "Snowbound" is an idyll, which I read to my children once each year even though I live where it never snows. Edward Everett Hale and love of country are synonymous. Charles Eliot was president of Harvard incidentally; really he was foster father to all who wanted clearer minds and bigger souls.

Going back a little, one day, while sitting by that woodbox, I read in Holmes's (not Oliver Wendell's) School History that John Harvard had sold a flock of sheep to found a school way back in 1636, and that Elihu Yale, almost a century later, had given an armful of books to found another. I could not stay by that woodbox any longer—the South with all its meaning was left behind, not without regrets, of course, and without knowing how it happened there is somewhere among my possessions a certificate, done in Latin, which tells a story. Back of and above that certificate there is a richer life, born out of the spirit I call Boston, a spirit not hemmed in by city limits or state lines.

THOMAS R. GAINES.

Los Angeles.

Some things that should be said . . .

THOSE who read new writers in the hope of discovering one of exceptional merit, are occasionally richly rewarded. Last week a novel was published—its title, God's Little Acre—its author, Erskine Caldwell.

God's Little Acre is not a first novel. In 1932 Caldwell wrote a book which attracted a small but intensely appreciative audience. Harry Hansen, reviewing the literary year just passed, selected the five young authors whose work had shown the most promise. Erskine Caldwell was one of them.

This critical opinion was based on a novel which revealed certain qualities—real and potential. These we feel have now come into their full maturity. If, in 1932, Caldwell was one among five, God's Little Acre should, in 1933, place him in an even smaller, more widely-read group.

Erskine Caldwell is of the South, as are the things of which he writes. As in other recent novels of the South, the sex theme is important. But there the similarity ends. Erskine Caldwell has been compared to Mark Twain, to Hemingway, to Sherwood Anderson, and his new book will doubtless evoke still further comparisons. But the publishers believe that all attempts to classify him are futile. Caldwell is *sui generis*—a writer who sees with a new eye and whose style is peculiarly fitted to convey not only the humor, but the primitive and powerful drama which he finds in his material.

God's Little Acre is full-blooded. Its theme may shock Yet, one cannot fail to respond to the gusty, earthy, humor with which it is written. Under the skillful pen of their creator, the characters—Ty Ty, the Rabelaisian patriarch; Darling Jill, his wanton daughter; Pluto, her portly suitor; Will, the rebel; Dave, the mysterious albino, Griselda, the beauty of the family—are drawn into inevitable conflict, accenting the tempo of an absorbing story.

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BY ERSKINE CALDWELL

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News from the States

What the SATURDAY REVIEW *most desires for this department is the pithy paragraph upon some significant matter, whether in relation to author's activities, bookselling activities and problems, the trend of reading in a particular territory, or allied matters. Booksellers' anecdotes will be welcomed. It is our aim to furnish a bird's-eye view of reading and writing America which will prove valuable both to our subscribers and to the book world at large. We hope that our subscribers will submit items from time to time.*

NEW BRUNSWICK, Canada, is outside the boundaries within which "News from the States" is properly gathered, but from Saint John Miss *Mary Flett* has very kindly sent us a paper entitled "From Fundy's Shores," stating that she hopes it "gets printed." While we cannot use all of it we are very glad to give you some of it as follows:—

There is one thing that New Brunswick (Canada) people can do, and that is, read with discretion. Of course some of us do depend on the Book-of-the-Month Club, and other stock-sizes lists, but praise the Lord, many of us have decided views of our own, and so bookselling, in Saint John at least, is well spiced.

Just at present, we are doing a fair country trade with "Peking Picnic." There's a book that is a book. Everything you could possibly want in the way of a tale, and a bit of poetry thrown in. Our most successful way of selling it, is not to remind the customer that it is the *Atlantic* prize, but to show the verses about "The Sleep Walker."

Van Loon's "Geography" promises to be a good investment. The jacket, which is also a map, appeals to many. The cheap, or rather, the cheaper, edition of San Michele is, to quote Mr. Wodehouse, "a sound idea."

Barrie's charming fantasy, "Farewell Miss Julie Logan," which we allowed some of our nearest and dearest customers to have last year, for a consideration, when it appeared as a supplement to the *London Times,* is now being sold in the regular way.

We do not pretend to have a second hand department, but occasionally we find a plum in an auction room. Recently we came across a copy of *Charles Dudley Warner's* "Baddeck and That Sort of Thing." We bought it for a cheep, and we sold it for a song, and both seller and purchaser got a real thrill from the performance.

By the way, does any one want a copy of *Godey's Lady's Book* of 1864? We were offered one the other day. *Grace Helen Mowat* of St. Andrews by the Sea, known to millionaires and artists, has brought out a successor to her "Funny Fables of Fundy." It is in fact a history of St. Andrews and is called "The Diverting History of a Loyalist Town." Diverting is the word for it.

COLORADO

Heloise B. Hawkins sends us the following:—

Biography and near-biography, among Colorado's books, are represented by "Life of an Ordinary Woman" by *Anne Ellis;* and "Broken Hand: The Life of Thomas Fitzpatrick," from the pen of *Dr. Le Roy Hafen.*

Relax for a moment! Read "Tall Stories" by *Lowell Thomas,* being "the rise and triumph of the Great American Whopper"; or "Colorado Reminiscences about War," the "funniest diary ever written," prepared by *Verner C. Beck.*

Now for additional items:—"Queer Person," *Ralph Hubbard;* "Miss Aladdin," *Christine Whiting Parmenter* (mother of Katherine, the poet); "Real Wild Bill of Hickok," a true pioneer story, by *W. E. Eisele;* "Pigboats," a submarine tale, by *Ellsberg;* "Young Desire," by *Clem Yore;* "Shoe the Wild Mare," by *Gene Fowler;* "Wives and Mothers," by *Jean Rudd;* "Guys and Dolls," by *Damon Runyon;* "Tower of Sand," collection of the inimitable stories of *Wilbur Daniel Steele,* and "Rolling Stone," by *Lowell Thomas.*

Last, but never least, poetry. Inexplicably, this list is extremely limited for the last two years. Here is another volume by *Edna Davis Romig,* "Torch Undimmed"; and a book commended by *Mary Austin,* by *Harriet Monroe,* and by *Witter Bynner,* namely, "The Little Blue Flute," *Charles Beghtol.*

HONOLULU

Clifford Gessler reports to us further concerning the state of literary affairs in Hawaii:—

Honolulu people gave books for Christmas, it appears. The day after the final rush, the book stores looked devastated. Booksellers say they did a good business, though mainly in low and medium priced books. "Three-fifty was about their limit," said *Don Bate,* retail manager of Honolulu Paper Co.

Fiction scored three to one over other books in frequency of demand at the Library of Hawaii (a public library supported by territorial funds) in the past year. The records show that male patrons preferred detective stories and western novels, and the women "the latest" novel. Adults and children wanted fiction, but high school students showed an increasing interest in serious works.

A development that has caused speculation among librarians is the interest in medical books, which are so much in demand that the Library of Hawaii has created a special department for them.

The visit of *Hamlin Garland* in November and the forthcoming visit of *Christopher Morley* in March have brought about increased call for the works of these two authors.

MINNESOTA

Marie Didelot of Minneapolis supplies the subjoined information:—

Until I saw a survey made by the Graduate Group, Inc., of the number of books which 15,161 graduates of fifteen universities purchased each year, I had thought that only gentlemen and ladies of the old-school, those survivals of the Victorian era, indulged themselves in this respect. I was wrong.

An average of eighteen volumes a year for each graduate, one and a half books a month, is the brilliant (?) showing that the group made. While the west profits by the average, the East suffers, in as much as the scholarly Harvard graduate reports that he buys 42 books a year, and in spite of metropolitan distractions, each alumnus of Columbia University adds 27 books to his library in the course of a year. (Of course, a borrower of books can exceed this record.) Yale competes with Columbia for second honors, but alas! Princeton, showing a record of 18 books a year, is outclassed by its rivals. Its record is challenged by graduates of the universities of Cornell, Dartmouth, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

IDAHO

From *George Gilmore,* of Boise, comes the following:—

A state as young as Idaho should not expect too much all at once in its efforts to build a literature that will reflect its individuality. But, as young as it is, Idaho does have a pride in one writer, *Vardis Fisher,* whose latest book "In Tragic Life" has won high praise from competent critics. Mr. Fisher writes of pioneer life, its toils and its hardships; and pioneering in Idaho is by no means a thing of the past. He is the author also of "Toilers of the Hills" and "Dark Bridwell."

Mr. James D. LeCron continues to draw large audiences whenever he gives his lectures on English gardens. Mr. LeCron illustrates his talks with color photographs from his collection that he made during the past year while studying European gardens and castles. Mr. LeCron, expert photographer, with Mrs. LeCron, author of many books, are preparing several books that will be published soon. Among the gardens shown by Mr. LeCron are those belonging to *Sir Philip Sassoon, Sir Frederick Ponsonby, Sir Charles Nall-Cain, The Viscount Devonport, The Earl of Iveagh, Countess Cowsley* and *Lady Pearson.* Small cottage gardens and attractive garden corners also have a place among the pictures shown by this most delightful artist.

PERSONALS

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A BOOK OF RARE BEAUTY AND LYRICAL PROSE

UMÉ
From the Colored Frontispiece

The Abiding of Umé

By EDITH A. SAWYER

Author of "The Way of Umé"

WHEREAS IT IS SAID THAT—"The appreciative reader who can savor books as well as read them, will find this miniature of the exotic beauty of one of the most fascinating of all foreign lands, delightful reading indeed." (1)—"The characters are poignantly appealing and true to the fundamentals of Japanese character." (2)—"Flawless is the shining surface of the golden side of Japan's shield which Miss Sawyer turns to us." (3)—"Not often since Lafcadio Hearn has Japan been appreciated so highly as in this book." (4)—"The value of her story lies in the color that her exotic scenes can lend to it, in the strange legends, the curious conventions that she seeds into the telling of the tale." (5)

(1) John Dallam III, *Phila. Record;* (2) Anita Moffett, N. Y. *Times;* (3) *The Boston Transcript;* (4) P. K. Mok, N. Y. *Herald Tribune;* (5) H. E. Wildes, *Phila. Ledger.*

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The PHŒNIX NEST

RUTH BENEDICT has sent us one of the *Booth Tarkington* sketches of the "Maud and Cousin Bill" series now on the air over WJZ, at 6 P.M., Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, directed by *Winifred Lenihan;* and we are perfectly willing to give her this much space for it because of our old and enduring love for Cousin Bill's "antological lavatory," and the profound verisimilitude of Tarkington's young girls and boys. When Maud reads Cousin Bill's "Nots on our Inseck Friends," we are entranced anew! . . .

We thank *Niña Jay Dusenberry* for sending us a Greek postcard from Flatbush on the occasion of our Groundhog birthday on February 2nd! Her rhyme was very clever, but we can't repeat it here because it gives away our identity. . . .

Dale Warren of the Houghton Mifflin Company has done a good personal sketch of the late *Gamaliel Bradford,* which Houghton Mifflin have reprinted from the *South Atlantic Quarterly.* At the end of it he compiles an interesting summary of the characters Bradford treated in biography. What a list it is! H-M are bringing out "The Journal of Gamaliel Bradford," edited by *Van Wyck Brooks,* in April. . . .

Last Spring *Anne Persov* of Detroit won the Avery Hopwood Major Poetry Award at the University of Michigan. Now Schuman's, old and rare book dealers in Detroit, are bringing out a limited edition of 250 copies of the prize-winning group of her poems, with a foreword by *Max Eastman,* long familiar with Miss Persov's work. Address 4840 Cass Avenue, Detroit, Michigan. Publication March first. . . .

In the Appleton biographies *Stephen Leacock* has done a *Mark Twain.* A combination of which we highly approve! . . .

Doubleday, Doran have brought out the O. Henry Memorial Prize-Winning Stories from 1919 to 1932 in one big volume, with an introduction, of course, by *Blanche Colton Williams.* . . .

We are glad to see that a manuscript, which we once toted back from England, and were unable to overcome publishers' apathy about, is now being published by Longmans. It is "The Ladies' Road," by *Pamela Hinkson,* the charming and talented daughter of the famous Irish poet, *Katharine Tynan.* In looking back at our short experience in book publishing it interests us to realize that several manuscripts we once had under our wing eventually not only found publishers but turned out to be well thought of by the public. And yet, at the time, our judgment wasn't supposed to be any too good! . . .

John Strachey, author of "The Coming Struggle for Power" (Covici-Friede), may lecture here, arriving in this country the first week in March, though it isn't absolutely certain yet. He married the brilliant *Esther Murphy,* one of our great American conversationalists. . . .

In a moment of horrible frankness we feel like admitting that about once a year we get sick unto death of the unending series of tributes poured out by an infinite number of publishers to celebrate the inestimably wonderful works of fact or fiction they present to the public. Sometimes we wish there were no such things as trade. It has a tendency to falsify all values, ruin honesty, and benumb the critical faculty. Work is the worst influence in the world! For work means that you must hold a job. A job means that you must sell something. Selling something means that you must convince someone that it is worth buying. Doing this means, inevitably, that you must indulge in all sorts of fancy lying! The trouble is that you meanwhile convince yourself that there is something praiseworthy about your working and that you possess a fine business honesty! . . . Actually, the people don't need more than one percent of the competitive products that are advertised with devilish ingenuity exerted to arouse the meanest traits in human nature, snobbery, cupidity, greed, cowardice, gluttony, and so on. We feel intensely sour about it today! Salvation would appear to reside solely in eating a certain food product, brushing one's teeth with a certain dentifrice, or learning a few tags of information. . . .

Well, we wonder why we got on this tack? Oh, about books! As a matter of fact there are few contemporary books worth reading. Everyone knows this. And it certainly isn't our place to say so. Therefore we say so. The realization comes over us every once in a while like a miasma! We really mean, we suppose, about one half of what we say. Because what in God's name would we, in our own nefarious career, have done without books? And what, we suppose, would the world have done without industry? It is right that Man should have to keep busy. Otherwise there'd be much worse trouble than there is—and surely there is enough! We write this on our middle-aged birthday. And we have been fairly industrious in our life, and don't intend to quit now. Oh, well, there 's a lot of fun in buying useless things, when one has the money! But the deeper we get into this subject the more complicated it becomes. So here is where we sign off. . . .

Let us leave this depressing philosophizing (if such it can be called) and cheer ourself up with a rhyme. The latest *Golden Book* revives a delightful set of *Harry Graham's* verses entitled "Poetical Economy." We cannot resist calling this to your attention:

When I've a syllable de trop,
I cut it off, without apol:.
This verbal sacrifice, I know,
May irritate the schol:;
But all must praise my dev'lish cunn:
Who realize that Time is Mon:.

Arthur Davison Ficke, the poet, sends us a postcard picture of the Shaw Park Hotel's private bathing beach, Jamaica, and says it's no place for us, as the Scotch is so good and pure that it produces no effect on him or his wife. "Minds accustomed to Bath-tub Gin are forever lost. But come anyway," he adds, "otherwise we may return to you sometime." We hope that's more of a promise than a threat. Well, here's to Arthur in Ocho Rios! . . .

Your last chance to see the Six Miracle Plays of the 11th century, that the Stage Alliance is presenting at the Guild Theatre, is tomorrow (Sunday) night at 8:45 P.M. For tickets apply at the box-office or by mail to the Stage Alliance, 19 East 56th Street. *Martha Graham, Paul Leyssac,* and *Alma Kruger* head a cast of twenty-five. *Natalie Hammond* has done the costumes, *Alice Laughlin* the sets. . . .

Joseph Lewis French sends us the following sonnet:

IN HER GARDEN

Here where the roses rim with fond desire
This Eden of her heart, I bow my head
And graceless crave the blessing yet unsaid
That dwelleth ever in her clear as fire.
I am her bondslave, thrall unto her hire.
She findeth me in life and hope and bread.
Small shame to her my riddle is unread,
Seeing of her spirit's wile the strength I tire.

My gracious lady, who in everything
Hath of my days such gentle lovely lust,
Still to the crowning of her soul I bring
The pilgrimage of ether turned to dust,
And where in joyance star-flowers should upspring
The dalliance of demons and a crust.

The Review has heard from *James Truslow Adams* that, owing to his having to take another doctor's degree, he is due in New York about April fourth and will not sail from the States again until the middle of June. He is now in London. . . .

We hear that a skeptical bookseller sent to Longmans (who publish "The Varieties of Religious Experience" by *William James*) an order for one copy of "The Vanities of Religious Expenses." . . .

In March, or as soon after as possible, the Frederick A. Stokes Company will bring out a book of about 40,000 words, entitled "It's Up to the Women," written by *Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt,* wife of the President-Elect. The writing of it will be completed before Inauguration Day.

Open through February at the Jones Library, Amherst, Massachusetts, will be an exhibition of the books and miscellaneous printing done by *Carl Purington Rollins* at Montague, Massachusetts, and New Haven, Connecticut, during the past thirty years. Mr. Rollins is our honored confrère who conducts "The Compleat Collector" on another page.

THE PHŒNICIAN.

"S.R.O." for this Play— in Bookstores—

**The cream of the season's books. Entertaining and in demand. How many have YOU read?*

- ☐ **THE SHELTERED LIFE** by Ellen Glasgow $2.50
- ☐ **THE FORTRESS** by Hugh Walpole $2.50
- ☐ **THE NARROW CORNER** by W. Somerset Maugham $2.50
- ☐ **HUMAN BEING** by Christopher Morley $2.50
- ☐ **A LONG TIME AGO** by Margaret Kennedy $2.00
- ☐ **THE GEORGIAN HOUSE** by Frank Swinnerton $2.50
- ☐ **WANTON MALLY** by Booth Tarkington $2.00
- ☐ **FAMILY HISTORY** by V. Sackville-West $2.50
- ☐ **THE BISHOP'S JAEGERS** by Thorne Smith $2.00
- ☐ **BEFORE THE FACT** by Francis Iles $2.00
- ☐ **NUR MAHAL** by Harold Lamb $2.50
- ☐ **ANNE BOLEYN** by E. Barrington $2.00

Lots of people are reading plays. Here are the season's best:

- ☐ **DESIGN FOR LIVING** $1.50
- ☐ **CAVALCADE** Both by Noel Coward $1.50
- ☐ **DINNER AT EIGHT** by George S. Kaufman and Edna Ferber $2.00
- ☐ **WILD DECEMBERS** by Clemence Dane $2.00

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN

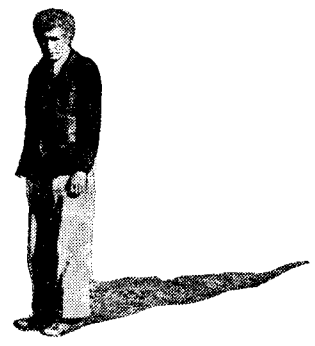
As we go to press, **DESIGN FOR LIVING,** by Noel Coward, is temporarily out of stock. We expected this scandalous comedy to stack them in queues around the Barrymore Theatre. But suddenly lines began forming in bookshops, too. It's delightful reading, at a $1.50 top.

ANN VICKERS is the book in the news, the new national Best Seller. Selling some 4,000 copies a day. Booksellers wonder whether this book has called the turn. 562 pages of Sinclair Lewis at his best—"Finest American novelist of his period," says *The Saturday Review.* $2.50.

If you've overlooked **PARSON'S NINE,** by Noel Streatfeild, you're missing one of the most delightful novels of the season. Some one says, "A less Bohemian *Sanger's Circus* in a parsonage." $2.00.

HUMAN BEING continues to be regarded by appreciative readers as the most beautiful and exciting novel Christopher Morley has written. The story of the Unknown Citizen—now in its 5th large printing. $2.50.

Check the list at the left* for some of the best-recommended reading of the year.



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